

RENAISSANCE



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RENAISSANCE

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All correspondence about publication of articles should be addressed to the Editor of *Renascence*, Marquette University, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin.

A letter from His Excellency, the Most Reverend Archbishop of Washington, D. C., and the Chancellor of Catholic University of America, the Pontifical university in this country sponsored by the entire hierarchy, to the chairman of the Catholic Renaissance Society:



ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

CHANCERY OFFICE
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October 26, 1948

Sister M. Dominic, S.S.N.D.,
The Catholic University of America,
Washington 17, D. C.

Dear Sister Dominic:

In an age which has seen so much harm to truth and to religion perpetrated by the pen, it is a pleasure to welcome the magazine, RENASCENCE, dedicated to the Catholic revival of letters. Because "literature is the immortality of speech" your efforts will have an effect beyond your own generation and society. I therefore extend to all those engaged in the work of publishing and aiding RENASCENCE my heartiest best wishes and sincere blessing.

Sincerely yours in Christ,


PATRICK A. O'BOYLE
Archbishop of Washington

Editorial: Here and Now

By JOHN PICK

DURING this past year intelligent readers have been vigorously discussing such writers as Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh, Thomas Merton, François Mauriac, Georges Bernanos—all men whose religion is the inspiration of their art.

In the midst of very critical times we today are still living in that auspicious Second Spring heralded by Newman a century ago. For almost a hundred years the soil has yielded a revival of Catholic thought and culture which has found an expression in art and literature. The roll call of great and significant names is long and distinguished, and one quickly recalls the work of Hopk'ns, Thompson, the Meynells, Patmore, Belloc, Chesterton, Eric Gill or of Huysmans, Bloy, Péguy, Maritain, Claudel, or Lowell. Then come to mind the scores of those less great who yet have contributed importantly to what should be a part of the heritage of every educated and aware person living today.

And yet the work and contribution of these men and women are all too little known to a world which so crucially needs them.

It will be the purpose of RENASCENCE to stimulate an appreciation for them by encouraging a critical evaluation of their work so that always the wheat may be winnowed from the chaff.

The magazine will not attempt to embalm the past—however glorious it may be—but to show it as ever-living and, too, it will dedicate itself vitally to the present by trying to enhearten those struggling today for a renewal of the spiritual wellsprings of art and letters.

For these purposes the soundest kind of critical scholarship is needed. We must not substitute sentimental effusions for discerning discrimination nor must we make pious intention an excuse for announcing a false dawn. The discipline of art is a hard and difficult one, and the discipline of a scholarship which is meticulous yet humane, sympathetic yet uncompromising, is no less arduous.

The potentialities of such a magazine as RENASCENCE are truly almost infinite. Their actualization depends very largely on the support and encouragement of all those who believe that the constant rebirth of spiritual values in art can give us the light of Spring rather than the dark of Winter.

The Catholic Renaissance Society:

Its Past and Future

By MOTHER GRACE, O.S.U.

There is within the Church today in our own country a reawakened interest in the riches of our inheritance, such as that which has characterized periodic renaissances in the Catholic life of France and England during the last hundred years. The bitter experiences of war and its consequent disillusionment have convinced many, outside the Faith as well as within, that the vacuum created by the early twentieth century positivistic values must be filled with the cultural heritage of Christian civilization, if we wish to save our humanistic way of life.

The peoples of the nations are now confronted by two challenges: Catholicism and materialism. And it is gladdening to observe that, in answer to this challenge, there are unmistakable signs of a new vitality within American Catholic life and thought itself: the two monumental projects of the new translations of the Fathers of the Church—one published by the Cima Company under the general editorship of Dr. Ludwig Schopp; the other, edited by Johannes Quasten and Joseph Plumpe, by the Newman Bookshop—are opening up the treasury of wisdom, culture and holiness reflected in the literary classics of the first nine centuries of Christianity; and the publication of the Science and Culture series is significant of this new Catholic awakening in science, art and letters; and, important among many other efforts to renew the intellectual life of the Church and to give allegiance to the rich traditions of her inheritance, figures the Catholic Renaissance Society.

This Society, unique in its objective of promoting the propagation of Catholic activity in the fields of literature, philosophy and art, will celebrate, at the time of its coming Spring symposium, the tenth anniversary of its inception. For this reason, it seems well-timed to give a brief résumé of its history and to re-state its aims and spirit.

The beginnings of the CRS were small and informal. A casual remark made by one teacher of French to another was the seed that fell on fertile ground. Having heard a lecture by the distinguished French scholar and critic, Charles Du Bos, Sister Marie Philip, C.S.J., professor of French at the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul, suggested to Sister M. Loyola, S.S.N.D., professor of French at Mount Mary College, Milwaukee, that it would be most advantageous for them and their colleagues in other mid-western colleges to attend a series of lectures by this same speaker that they, also, might share in his "great simplicity" and "poetic insight." Sister Loyola, reacting with enthusiasm, suggested Chicago as the most suitable place for such a gathering, and, having been a student of the Religious of the Sacred Heart, she asked for hospitality at their academy on Sheridan Road. Her request was graciously granted and arrangements were made for that initial meeting. M. Du Bos agreed to give three lectures on Paul Claudel and the

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date was set for May 6, 1939. In the archives of the Society, an autographed letter from Charles Du Bos, dated February 13, 1939, indicates his great interest in being *conférencier* of the group because, as he did "not hesitate to say . . . among living writers, Catholics or non-Catholics, there is no greater man of genius than Claudel." When the day arrived, however, the speaker was too ill to participate and the meeting had to be canceled. The death of the great-souled M. Du Bos in late summer was a distinct loss to France, to the Church, to Catholic letters and to the little group of nuns who were looking to him for leadership in their new project.

Evidently, however, the seed had taken deep root, the co-founders were undaunted by disappointments, and so, the movement prospered. The following year hospitality was again offered by Mother McLaughlin of the Convent of the Sacred Heart and the first symposium of the Catholic Renaissance Society took place on April 6, 1940. A worthy successor to M. Du Bos was found in the Reverend Louis J. Bondy, C.S.B., chairman of the French department at St. Michael's College and professor in the Graduate School of the University of Toronto. Announcing the event, Sister Marie Philip's circular letter stressed the "unusual academic background" of Father Bondy noting that he had done graduate work at the University of Chicago, Johns Hopkins, The University of Toronto, The Sorbonne, The Institut Catholique de Paris, and The Collège de France, was the author of a work on Brunetière, and at the University of Toronto had directed research in the field of Catholic revival since 1929. Father Bondy's lectures on "The Catholic Revival in Contemporary French Literature", "Claudel as a Dramatist", and "Claudel as a Lyric Poet" evoked a lively discussion from the audience. Sister Evelyn, O.P., President of Rosary College, presided at this meeting, which numbered about one hundred, the representatives of about thirty colleges. Reverend Mother McLaughlin and Sister M. Loyola acted as hostesses. The high level of this symposium assured the success of future meetings and prompted the proposal that a permanent organization of the group be formed. This suggestion was carried out with the election of the first officers: Sister Marie Philip, C.S.J., and Sister Mary Loyola, S.S.N.D., co-chairmen; Sister Jerome, O.S.B., of the College of Mount St. Scholastica, treasurer; and Mother Rodgers, R.S.H.J., Barat College, secretary. Mother Rodgers later resigned and Sister Rosemary, O.P., Rosary College, was appointed in her place. Before the meeting adjourned, Sister Evelyn, O.P., invited the group to Rosary College for the 1941 convention.

Interest in this movement spread among the faculties of Catholic colleges because the consensus of opinion seemed to be that there was a need for such a Catholic organization to promote culture and scholarly research in the field of Romance languages. To elicit aid in formulating the general policy, the officers sent out questionnaires, the findings of which showed that as early as August, 1940, those interested recognized the need of extending membership beyond the frontiers of the French departments.

In March, 1941, a second symposium, centering around the novels of Georges Bernanos, was held at Rosary College, under the leadership of Dr. Helmut A. Hatzfeld of the Catholic University of America, writer, critic, and formerly head of the Romance Language department at the University of Heidelberg. His masterly lectures were mimeographed and sent to all members of the Society. At this meeting, a high light in many ways, at which sixty universities, colleges and preparatory schools were represented, the

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present name of the Society was determined upon, a committee was appointed to draw up a constitution, and a cable was sent to Georges Bernanos, at that time a political exile in Brazil, informing him of the symposium organized to study and discuss his works. Sister M. Loyola sent him a detailed account of the symposium and received in return an appreciative and informative reply, a copy of which is now in the files of the Catholic Renaissance Society. M. Bernanos included this letter in his book *Le chemin de la croix-des âmes* (1946).

Dr. Dietrich von Hildebrand, associate professor of philosophy in the Graduate School of Fordham University, author, critic and formerly professor of philosophy at the Universities of Munich and Vienna, delivered three lectures on Religion and Culture at the third annual meeting of March, 1942. The Sisters of Mercy, of Saint Xavier College, Chicago, generously offered the hospitality of their school for the days of the convention, which, under the chairmanship of Sister Marie Philip, C.S.J., was most successful in regard to choice of speaker, numbers attending and widely-shared stimulation.

The newly elected chairman, Sister M. Loyola, S.S.N.D., was already negotiating for the fourth meeting and had secured the consent of Mr. Julian Green, author of *Memories of Happy Days*, to speak on Charles Péguy and Léon Bloy, when war intervened and, in compliance with government restrictions on travel, the annual meetings for the next three years were suspended.

In March, 1946, the Society met for the first time in the East, taking advantage of the hospitality and interest offered by the Religious of Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart. Wallace Fowlie, author of *De Villon à Péguy*, *Ernest Psichari*, *Rimbaud*, etc., and member of the French department of Yale, lectured brilliantly on Péguy, Rouault and Maritain. These papers were later published by Sheed and Ward as *Jacob's Night*. This meeting was memorable, due to these talks which, according to Dr. Hatzfeld, were "high-leveled, stimulating, deep, impressive" and to the valuable discussions from the floor, led by Reverend Louis J. Bondy, Dr. Helmut Hatzfeld, Dr. Dietrich von Hildebrand, M. Pierre Claudel, Dr. Daniel Walsh, Mr. Maurice Lavanoux, managing editor of *Liturgical Arts*, Mother O'Byrne, Father Alfred Barrett, S.J., recently returned from a visit with Rouault in Paris, and others. At this assemblage, ably presided over by Sister Camille, O.S.F., vice-chairman, representing Sister Loyola who was ill at the time, honorary membership was bestowed upon all past lecturers of the Society and, also on Dr. Fowlie and M. Pierre Claudel. The latter spoke informally to the group, giving some recent information concerning his father. He concluded, "It was magnificent. My father will be so interested in hearing about it and will be delighted to know of the really fine work being done by American professors in the Catholic Renaissance."

In March 1947, the Sisters of Loretto invited the Society to hold its fifth meeting at Webster College, Missouri. Mauriac, the man, the novelist and his contemporaries, was the subject for the lectures, given by an authority Pierre Brodin, director of the Lycée français de New York, professor of history and literature at the Ecole Libre des Hautes Etudes and at Hunter College and lecturer at Columbia University. The general discussion, with Sister Camille, O.S.F., as chairman, was particularly spontaneous and was participated in by nearly all present.

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The sixth annual convention, with Sister George, O.P., presiding, met again in Chicago, at Lewis Towers. Dr. Yves Simon, author of many philosophical works, formerly professor of philosophy at the Catholic University of Lille, France, and since September, 1948, a member of the faculty of The University of Chicago, gave three scholarly lectures on the relation of the Catholic Renaissance in France to society and to temporal problems. At this meeting an important step was taken in the appointment of Mr. Clarence Wilkinson of Marquette University as chairman of a committee which would work on the project of a bibliography or annual bulletin sponsored by the Society.

The coming Spring symposium, the seventh, planned to take place on the Tuesday and Wednesday of Easter week, 1949, at Manhattanville College, New York City, promises to be another red-letter event appropriate for the celebration of the Society's tenth birthday. Encouraged by the interest of important scholars in various branches of knowledge, the CRS is sprouting new wings and is exhilaratingly lifting its gaze toward widened horizons of a cultural internationalism. Three distinguished speakers, the Reverend Gerald G. Walsh, S.J., professor of Medieval cultural history, Graduate School of Fordham University and editor of *Thought*, Dr. Helmut Hatzfeld, professor of Romance languages and literatures, Catholic University, and Mr. Francis J. O'Malley, professor of English, University of Notre Dame, have consented to contribute the main addresses on *Catholic Values in a Disintegrating World*. The lectures will develop "The Notion of Renaissance," "The Renaissance in the Novel: From Léon Bloy to Graham Greene," "The Renaissance in Literary Criticism: From Henri Bremond to Romano Guardini" and "The Renaissance in Poetry: From Gerard Manley Hopkins to Gertrude von Le Fort". Former lecturers and other leaders in literary and philosophical thought have expressed their interest in participating in the discussions from the floor.

In line with these enlarged objectives, the Society's new bulletin, *Renascence*, is making its initial appearance with this issue.

It is symbolic of the hopes of all members that the spirit of the Society may become vivified with new life, in order to increase its influence during these days of crisis when, not only our Catholic heritage but even our western humanistic culture is threatened with dissolution. Pius XII has called for greater intellectual leadership in this rationalistic age. It is a time when Dante's admonition in his *Monarchia* is pertinent for the educated Catholic: "He, who, himself imbued with public teachings, yet cares not to contribute aught to the public good, may be well assured that he has fallen far from duty." Dante's ideal for himself was to be as a tree by the streams of contemporary waters, bearing his fruit in due season, "Lest I should one day be convicted of the charge of the buried talent, I long not only to burgeon, but also to bear fruit for the public advantage."

A magnificent legacy of truth and culture is ours to disseminate. As in the renaissances of Christian ages, poetry, literature, philosophy and the arts should again be the sisters and helpmates of the Church. For in the past, as Francis Thompson reminds us, "The palm and the laurel, Dominic and Dante, sanctity and song, grew together in her soil." The palm has ever flourished and now the laurel is flowering into beauty. It is this new manifestation of the Church's fecundity that the CRS has been organized to

(Continued on Page 39)

The Growth of the French Revival

BY HELMUT A. HATZFELD

The fact that since the second half of the nineteenth century Catholic literature in France has become increasingly important can be explained only by its double spiritual and esthetic values. This explanation has never been systematically attempted, and it may therefore be worthwhile to study the historical and organic growth of these values on the basis of the texts and recent critical bibliography and by following closely the respective *événements littéraires*.¹

I

BAUDELAIRE

During the era of Enlightenment and Romanticism, beliefs and morals had become so subjective that even Catholics like Chateaubriand, Lamartine, and Lamennais, weakened in their objective outlook, proved unable to swim against the stream of subjective wishful thinking. But one poet was to turn the tide, one who did not admit any compromises as to the objective existence of an unchangeable *divine world order and of moral law*. This poet could be a great sinner himself, he could write poetry from the sincerity of his heart, poetry which certainly did not make appropriate reading for everybody but in which subjective ideas were not confused with objective truths and sin was not called virtue. This poet was Charles Baudelaire (1821-67), who published in 1857 his volume of poetry called *Les fleurs du mal*.²

These *Flowers of Evil* give many a picture of tragic, sensuous, perverse, blasphemous love, because they give a picture of the post-romantic poet's plight, but these pictures are fused with outcries of remorse, sadness, yearnings for purity, striking glimpses of Faith and of the Pascalian awareness of the menace of the "gouffre" and "néant." Two points are particularly dear to the poet: first, that this world is a forest of symbols and that the meaning of the things we see and hear and smell and touch is hidden from us. This is a new quasi-mediaeval awareness of the supernatural; second, that sin is *the* evil and stems from demoniacal forces behind it. This is the Baudelairean restitution of the minimum elements of a Catholic World in which Original Sin and the Redemption are ineluctable facts.

As an artist Baudelaire makes his statements concerning this new Catholic order in poignant verses and uncanny metaphors. His poetry expresses the unsolvable mysteries, sorrow, sentiment of guilt, a sense of a God who seems silent:

Partout l'homme subit la terreur du mystère
Et ne regarde en haut qu'avec un oeil tremblant. (*Le Couverture*)
Je sais que la douleur est la noblesse unique. (*Bénédiction*)
Nous avons blasphémé Jésus
Des Dieux le plus incontestable. (*Examen de minuit*)
Mais je poursuis en vain le Dieu qui se retire. (*Le Coucher du soleil*)

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These epigrammatic verses are followed by strange metaphors which deal with concupiscence and temptation, remorse and relapse, the awareness of Satan and Hell:

Et le vent furibond de la concupiscence
Fait claquer notre chair ainsi qu'un vieux drapeau. (*Femmes damnées*)

Sur l'oreiller du mal c'est Satan Trismégiste
Qui berce longuement notre esprit enchanté
Et le riche métal de notre volonté
Est tout varporisé par ce savant chimiste. (*Au Lecteur*)

Je suis un cimetière abhorré de la lune,
Où comme des remords se traînent de longs vers
Qui s'acharnent toujours sur mes morts les plus chers. (*J'ai plus de souvenirs*)

II

VERLAINE

In 1881, more than twenty years after Baudelaire's *Fleurs du mal* appears Paul Verlaine's *Sagesse*.³ This collection of religious poems springs from a palpable reconversion experience and reveals the positive values of *awe, recollection and prayer*, in which the wisdom of faith based on a humble simplicity appears as the leitmotif (Poems I, 2, 3, 9, 18; III, 1, 3). Verlaine uses various means to express these religious feelings; sometimes he uses the stammering of a soul overwhelmed by grace, sometimes a synesthetic exchange and mixture of vague impressions to show the struggle between the worldly and the divine; sometimes a simple, sincere childlike assurance to Mary that he will never leave the fold again. There are echoes of the Scriptures, St. Augustine, and Pascal's *Mystère de Jésus*, when Verlaine is kneeling before his God, who changed his life:

O mon Dieu, vous m'avez blessé d'amour,
Et la blessure est encore vibrante. . . .
O mon Dieu, votre crainte m'a frappé
Et la brûlure est encore là qui tonne. . . .
O mon Dieu, j'ai connu que tout est vil
Et votre gloire en moi s'est installée.

This prayer becomes a dialogue when the poet feels that Christ asks one thing from him, Love. Now the awareness that God wants a sinful creature to love Him, puts the poet so out of bond and into a joyful bliss, that he can only stammer paradoxical words, culminating in the question whether such a wish is still reasonable:

(Le Christ)—Il faut m'aimer! Je suis l'universel Baiser.

(Le Poète)—Seigneur, c'est trop. Vraiment je n'ose. Aimer qui? VOUS?

O! non! Je tremble et n'ose. O! vous aimer, je n'ose,
Je ne veux pas! je suis indigne. Vous, la Rose
Immense des purs vents de l'Amour, ô Vous, tous
Les coeurs des Saints, ô Vous qui fûtes le Jaloux
D'Israël, Vous, la chaste abeille qui se pose
Sur la seule fleur d'une innocence mi-close.
Quoi, moi, moi pouvoir Vous aimer. Etes-vous fou. . . ?

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Now he understands, he *can* pray, if such a loving response expects prayer. And for the first time he feels what active recollection means, that preparation of the soul, which becomes detached from things worldly in view of the solitude with God. Lyrical and entirely new half-tunes, with adverbial clauses as epithets, indicate how shadow-like the noises of life, caught in sketchy metaphors and surprising comparisons, appear in this blissful solitude of recollection:

O vous, comme un qui boîte au loin, Chagrins et Joies,
Toi, coeur saignant d'hier qui flambes aujourd'hui,
C'est vrai, pourtant, que c'est fini, que tout a fui
De nos sens, aussi bien les ombres que les proies.
Vieux bonheurs, vieux malheurs, comme une file d'oies
Sur la route en poussière, où tous les pieds ont lui,
Bon voyage! . . .
. . . Un doux vide, un grand renoncement,
Quelqu'un en nous qui sent la paix immensément,
Une candeur d'une fraîcheur délicieuse. . .

Verlaine understands that recollection, if it could be permanent, would be the solution of the Christian life. This he says in very impressive concrete lines:

Le Sage peut, dorénavant
Assister aux scènes du monde,
Et suivre la chanson du vent,
Et contempler la mer profonde.
Il ira, calme, et passera
Dans la férocité des villes,
Comme un mondain à l'Opéra
Qui sort blasé des danses viles.

III

BLOY

One value was overlooked by Verlaine, and his personal lapses were certainly due to his neglect of practical asceticism. This value becomes the great obsession of Léon Bloy (1876-1917), who published in 1886 the first modern Catholic novel, *Le désespéré* and, ten years later, a similar work, *La femme pauvre*.⁴ His concerns are *suffering and poverty*, which are necessary and have to be practiced with love in a Christian world, not only in the cloister, and which are the expression of a quasi-mystical impatience and expectation of eternal life. Therefore he urges shifting the stress from the commandments to the counsels. The struggle for sanctity in the world does not go without unimaginable pains and sorrow, as may be learned from the mysteries of Faith and particularly from Our Sorrowful Mother, *Celle qui pleure*, Our Lady of Salette, symbol of an indescribable sadness in view of the modern world's ignoring its Redemption. Bloy's two great novels are entirely informed by these ideas, and they are, to a high degree, autobiographical. Living in the time of the full-fledged naturalism of Zola, Bloy does not hesitate to embrace the same crude, rough, and even vulgar style for giving the background of the modern world, and to graft on it an ecclesiastical vocabulary and apostolic comparisons. It is precisely this style with its prophetic features which best can show the odd position in which Catholicism finds itself in such an unsympathetic world. This

method gives Bloy a certain Biblical greatness. His Spanish imagination (due at least in part to his descent) drives him on the other hand time and again into a Catholic *écriture artiste*.

Le désespéré is written in that style. The hero is the painter Marchenoir who tries to save Véronique from her life as a prostitute by taking her into his house in spite of the great danger to himself of which he is warned by many a confessor. Véronique, aware of the situation, deprives herself of every attraction, disfigures her face, has her hair cut, has all her teeth pulled out, prays for Marchenoir and, so reciprocating his charity with hers, kills his sensuality by her very ugliness.

La femme pauvre, clad in a still more visionary style, is Clotilde, a painter's model, who has grown up under the most degrading moral conditions. She is saved by Gacognol, whose friend Leopold marries her. Due to the fact that both become fervent Catholics, refusing any compromise with the world, they are bound to live in complete poverty. Their situation becomes one of great misery. They are starving, their child dies, their neighbors in the slum where they live insult Clotilde and wound her morally to death. They are the victims of all the vulgarities of their surroundings. When Leopold dies, Clotilde becomes a beggar woman but also a saint.

Elle a même compris que la femme n'existe vraiment qu'à la condition d'être sans pain, sans gîte, sans amis, sans époux et sans enfants et c'est comme cela seulement qu'elle peut forcer à descendre son Sauveur.

To the last friend of her husband, Lazare Druides, who deplores the sadness of her life, Clotilde answers: "Il n'y a qu'une tristesse, c'est de n'être pas des SAINTS."

That Bloy himself lived in extreme poverty, that he was instrumental in the conversion of a considerable number of the French intelligentsia (among them the Maritains), that he renounced work offered him by non-Catholic newspapers—all that proves the seriousness of his ascetical attempts. His Catholic-naturalistic style is hard for us to accept. We must, however, take his diatribes as a serious expression of his sacred wrath against bourgeois civilization which he considers to be the work of the Devil. Let us listen to his ironical pamphleteer style:

"Je profane les puante ciboires qui sont les vases sacrés de la religion démocratique."

On peut toujours offrir sa vanité, comme une hostie, sous les espèces consacrées d'une injuste proscription dont on est victime.

Après dix ans d'un impur noviciat dans les latrines de l'examen philosophique étant déjà sur le point de prononcer de stercoraires vœux . . .

Cette affreuseté de la putréfaction sépulcrale est à se faire cabrer les cavalades de l'Apocalypse.

IV

BOURGET

After such extremes as those of Léon Bloy, Paul Bourget (1852-1935) understood that Catholicism had to popularize its *apologetic values*, in order to recover ground in the world of Darwinism and of Taine's materialistic theory of race, historical epoch, and environment.⁵ It was in 1889 that Bourget published his *Le disciple*, followed in 1904

by *Le divorce*, in 1914 *Le démon du midi*, and in 1915 by *Le sens de la mort*. I choose these four books from the many Bourget has written to show his rational, constructive, and methodical manner of proving a thesis within the framework of an excellent and very readable story. At the price of an intellectualization of the heart Bourget tries to face the tensions between science and faith. Bourget's attempt gains momentum from the fact that the traditional methods of apologetics had lost their effect on non-Catholics during the nineteenth century, so that already Lacordaire had tried to give this theological branch a new twist. Bourget's logical, analytical, and highly unpoetical "problem" style makes his defence of faith acceptable to the bourgeois of a realistic generation.

Bourget's fundamental idea is that a doctrine which leads to moral catastrophes is wrong, and a doctrine which heals and softens the difficulties in the world is right, which seems certainly a practical but not a decisive point of Catholic teaching. He expresses these ideas in dialogues interlarded with scholastic terms. The dogma appears like a natural law. André Greslou (*Le disciple*), student of the great Professor Adrien Sixte, was taught by his master that everything has to be verified by experiment. As a preceptor of Charlotte, a rich young lady, he makes the "experiment" of seducing her and the girl takes poison. Greslou is tried for murder and attempts to put the responsibility on his master. Before the professor can plead for André in court, however, the latter is shot by Charlotte's brother. Fighting Taine with Taine's method Bourget's procedure is awkward because it interprets spiritual realities as moral systems.

However, Bourget scores a great success when he attacks the new divorce laws of France by a kind of apologetic action rather than discussion. Nevertheless, the cold matter-of-fact style does not undergo any change due to enthusiasm for the cause defended. Madame Albert Darras, divorced and married in second wedlock to an atheistic but noble-minded architect, feels like going to Communion again when her little daughter is preparing for her First Communion. A Jesuit father, whom she thinks to be very broad, indicates her terrible obligation to leave her second husband. The catastrophe turns out greater, when the son of Mme. Darras' first marriage wants to marry a divorced girl of doubtful reputation and denies his mother the right to teach him morals, since her own behavior has hardly been exemplary. Here again Bourget simplifies the issue by causing the first husband of Mme. Darras to die, thus setting her free, but he makes an excellent point nevertheless for Catholic teaching on the indissolubility of marriage by showing the destructiveness of divorce legalized by "cette loi criminelle, meurtrière, d'anarchie et de désordre." He says everything with an elegant precision.

In *Le démon du midi* the temptations of luxury and pride serve to give an interpretation of modernism. They are illustrated by the adulterous love of the Catholic historian and candidate for the French parliament, Louis Savignan, as well as by the deviation of the Abbé Fauchon into doctrines of modernism. Again long conversations rich in technical terms frame and interrupt the novel. The poignancy comes from Bourget's success in showing that the greatest sins of the flesh are still inferior to the sins of pride, to spiritual adultery, though in this special case Abbé Fauchon finds the way back and Savignan does not. This novel was written under the fresh impression of the Encyclical *Pascendi* (1907). It is however less fair to the tragedy of modernism than Malègue's *Augustin ou le Maître est là* (1933) written at the necessary distance from the events.

Le sens de la mort was a fruit of World War I, justifying from a supernatural angle the hecatombs of soldiers killed in the prime of life. Therefore the Catholic war hero, Captain Le Gallic, a hopeless case in the hospital, is opposed to his materialistic physician Ortègue, who is also doomed, suffering from cancer. Whereas the Christian looks forward to death with integrity, the doctor can not face it and even urges his young wife to follow him by suicide. The value of this novel lies in the photograph it gives of many small psychological facts, whereas the characters seem academic opponents rather than passion-torn human beings.

Bourget always guides the reader by his black and white demonstrations. For instance, Jacques Savignan in *Le démon du midi* has a piety too feverish to be sane, whereas his father's Catholicism is too intellectual to deserve the name of Catholicism at all. These contrasts invade Bourget's professional style: "Il faut vivre comme on pense, sinon . . . on finit par penser comme on a vécu." A modern critic would not grant these methodically written apologetic novels the name of psychological novels which Bourget claims for them. For though Bourget makes plausible the reasonableness of the fundamental tenets of the Church, he fails to change the *raisonneurs* who defend them into convincing human beings who live them.

V

HUYSMANS

To rediscover the *beauty of the Church* in her inner sanctum, her ceremonies and vestments, her architecture, music and painting, and her divine service in all its dignity and grandeur—this was the privilege of Joris-Karl Huysmans.⁶ After having been entangled like Bloy and to some extent also like Bourget in all the naturalistic ugliness of life and letters, he made a decisive return in his novel *En route* in 1895. This book was followed by two other volumes, *La cathédrale* of 1898 and *L'oblate* of 1903, forming a trilogy to which may be added *Les foules de Lourdes* of 1905. Huysmans, under the name of Des Esseintes and Durtal has discovered the truth of the Church through her fascinating splendor. He studies the dignified austerity of a Trappist abbey, where he makes his conversional retreat and tests his vocation. He lives then for a certain time in Chartres to study under the guidance of Abbé Plomb the whole mediaeval symbolism as offered by the architecture and sculpture of the cathedral. Finally, after having acquired an intimate knowledge of the spiritual treasures hidden in the Church, he feels attracted by the Opus Dei of the Benedictines and becomes an oblate in one of their monasteries, "Val des Saints." He studies their Office and institutions and discovers the values of the liturgy by going through its history under all imaginable aspects. The anti-clerical laws of 1902 force Durtal to return to private life in Paris.

Huysmans is certainly not a mere esthete. He is the offspring of a family of Dutch artists, and Beauty and Art were bound to become for him the most legitimate entrance doors to the Church, if Saint Thomas' statement, that grace supposes nature, has its full meaning. Huysmans never tires of underscoring this fact himself.

Durtal in *En route* stresses as a proof of Catholicism its art, that art which no other art ever has outdone—painting, sculpture, poetry, prose, music, Gregorian chant, architecture, all these gathered into one tapestry. Huysmans lives so much in the liturgical beauty of the Middle Ages that he expresses himself in deliberate archaisms fusing in an

unique way naturalistic art with medieval symbolism thus giving the whole an impressionistic turn by an "ironical syntax." His eyes are so drunk with forms and sounds and colors that he invents the most curious images: the altar candles wear a skirt of paper; the singing voices form sheaves running through the vaults; certain timbres of the organ remind him of breaking crystals; the Gregorian chant forms Romanesque arches. Durtal can not live without the Beauty of the Office; he has the savor of the liturgy in the very blood of his soul. The introit, *Gaudeamus in Domino* is an air that dances but ends in a prostration similar to that of the ancients of the epistle of All Saints' Day who are adoring before the throne, their faces against the earth. Full of admiration for greatness in ecclesiastical art, he sharply criticizes modern devotional art in *Le foules de Lourdes*. Huysmans' mosaic of the Catholic liturgical and spiritual world is rich and adorned with an unusual verbal skill. The writer cries his new ecclesiastical discoveries into the ears of his readers by taking up the noun again with the pronoun in the very same sentence: "*Cette église idéale elle a existé pendant des siècles*" (*En route*). His own surprise at the newly discovered piety keeps him and the readers in suspense by "phrases farcies": "Le grand silence se fit et chacun, la tête dans ses mans, pria" (*En route*). All his moods are expressed by the reckless choice, position, and length of his epithets. Irritation: "Toutes ces mensongères et prétentieuses oraisons"; enthusiasm: "L'humble et le glorieux chant."

VI

PEGUY

Huysmans has discovered the beauty of the liturgy, but its spirit, the spirit of the com-union, the spirit of *solidarity and interdependence* of the members of that *corpus mysticum* whose Head is Christ and imparting to them His Charity, this was much better felt by another author, Charles Péguy (1873-1914) who startled his contemporaries in 1906 when he published *Le mystère de la charité de Jeanne d'Arc*.⁷

Péguy is not so easily satisfied with the Church as he sees her. Saint Joan of Arc's problem in her discussions with the little girl Hauviette and the old, poised, and saintly Madame Gervaise does not concern art and taste, but turns on the central point of whether salvation is for a few, or for many. In view of mankind's meditating on the passion of Christ, St. Joan observes that so many seem to be lost in spite of Christ's blood shed for all. This point makes Péguy unquiet and this thought so intolerable to him is joined by another—that modern socialism seems to come nearer to the spirit of brotherhood than the Church of the twentieth century which in spite of her tradition and spirit of poverty seems linked to a capitalistic world. Péguy ponders and ponders over the greater values present in the French peasant and worker and all the poor little families, real pictures of the Holy Family, as he believes. From the natural he wants to get a logical access to the supernatural. He intimates that the natural, in the sense of the forces of blood and soil, clan and nation, was not neglected by Christ himself. Therefore he makes Him say:

Les pleurs que j'ai versés sur un mont solitaire,
Les pleurs que j'ai pleurés quand j'ai pleuré sur eux,
C'étaient les mêmes pleurs et de la même terre
Et de la même race et des mêmes hébreux.

The Universal Church makes sense to him only if she is first of all rooted in the French soil. Was there a more pious woman than his mother, the caner of old chairs in the Cathedral of Orleans? She is the ideal Catholic woman. She educated him in the Catholic peasant way for which body and soul, earth and heaven, flesh and spirit, France and God are inseparable, and therefore the spiritual begins with the earthly, the supernatural with the natural: "*Car le surnaturel est lui-même charnel*" (*Eve*). First you must foster all the natural virtues, reliability, faithfulness, patriotism, unselfishness, and develop a natural practical spirit of sacrifice, otherwise the socialists will take over the role of the Saints of the Church whose charity was practical altruism, whereas the modern Catholic serves Mammon and just talks about infused virtues.

With all his faithfulness to the soil, with all his atavism and his sincerity, with all the stubbornness of a peasant, Péguy is a devout servant of the Blessed Virgin into whose arms at Chartres he puts his sick child, to whose care he recommends his family, whose statue he decorates in the night before his death in the forest of Saint-Witz. But he never practices, he never approaches the sacraments because he wants the solidarity in the com-unio of his still unbelieving wife at least, which he feels he cannot get. He dares the blasphemous-holy challenge to God:

Et s'il faut, pour sauver de l'absence éternelle
Les âmes des damnés s'affolant de l'absence,
Abandonne mon âme à l'absence éternelle,
Que mon âme s'en aille en l'absence éternelle. (*Le mystère de la charité de Jeanne d'Arc*).

With the same peasant stubbornness in a style of endless permutations and repetitions, at the same time elementary and sublime, in heroic monotony, he reiterates to his readers that all the saints had something of the traditional French peasant and worker in them, not only Joan of Arc but also Saint Joseph and even Our Lord Himself who was truly great when He worked as a carpenter in his foster-father's shop:

Il travaillait, il était dans la charpente
Dans la charpenterie
Il avait même été un bon ouvrier
Comme il avait été un bon tout.

.

Il était fait pour ce métier-là.
Sûrement
Le métier des berceaux et des cercueils,
Qui se ressemblent tant.
Des tables et des lits.

.

Le métier des buffets, des armoires, des commodes,
Des mées,
Pour mettre le pain.
Des escabeaux.
Et le monde n'est que l'escabeau de vos pieds
Car dans ce temps-là les menuisiers n'étaient pas encore.
Séparés des charpentiers.
(*Jeanne d'Arc*)

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The social program turns into prayer, the idea of *social solidarity into Charity*. Péguy has a vague idea of something like a Christian communism. Of course, Péguy was attacked for his ideas, but he answered that today the only imitator of Christ is the worker. He declared bitingl that:

L'homme aujourd'hui qui travaille est un homme qui fait comme Jésus, qui imite Jésus. . . . Des milliers d'ateliers obscurs . . . sont les reflets parmi nous, reflètent, répètent, répètent parmi nous, l'atelier obscur, l'humble atelier de Nazareth. Et ceci est le tissu même et la moelle du monde chrétien. . . . Et celui qui n'a quitté l'établi et la varlope que pour se coucher mourir est celui qui est le plus agréable à Dieu.

M. Laudet est . . . un chrétien pour paroisses riches (c.à.d, isolé!). Toute famille chrétienne a les yeux fixés sur la famille de Nazareth. Des milliers de familles . . . ont gagné le ciel, ensemble, en famille, les yeux uniquement fixés sur la famille de Nazareth.

("Un nouveau théologien, Monsieur Laudet," *Nouvelle Revue Française*, 1936, 30-31).

VII

BAUMANN

Péguy, though he died a hero, did not see that the supernatural *Catholic spirit of sacrifice*, informed certainly by the life of Christ, is still more informed by his sacrificial passion and death than by his "workman's" life. To have used this fundamental Catholic value of Christian *vicarious sacrifice* for his novels is the merit of Emile Baumann.⁸ He published in 1908 a novel called *L'immolé*. It was followed by many others, among them *Le baptême de Pauline Ardel* (1913), *Job le prédestiné* (1922) and *Le signe sur les mains* (1926). Baumann does not start by observing life but by studying the Scriptures and St. Thomas and by interpreting life in the light of his theological findings. Therefore there is no enigma for him. He has the courage or perhaps the temerity to extract the most difficult and bewildering teachings, as for instance, St. Paul's that we have to make up for what is still lacking in the suffering of Christ, or the doctrine of the reversibility of merits. He then constructs cases of hardly possible sacrificial lives in the setting of contemporary France to prove that these doctrines actually do materialize in the Church. He implies that cases of grace are verifiable for every Catholic and not only for the few who have the discernment of spirits as a charisma. He is not too bashful to give the reader direct explanations for everything so that no interpretation but that of the author is possible.

Daniel Rovère, *L'immolé*, and his mother, advised by a priest, offer their lives in atonement for their father's and husband's guilt. Daniel, in a fight with anticlericals, is practically nailed to the church door, while his mother renounces a cure of her malady.

In *Le baptême de Pauline Ardel*, the voluntary victim is the girl's lover, who failing to bring the unbaptized girl into the Church by natural means, attains this end by offering his young life as a sacrifice which is accepted, as one sees from the diary left by the boy after his death.

Job le prédestiné is a modern henpecked husband, Bernard Dieuzède, a bookseller who undergoes every imaginable degradation and sorrow, bankruptcy, unfaithful-

ness of his wife, abandonment by his daughter, starvation and blindness as a conscious victim, a soul without complaint.

The victim of *Le signe sur les mains* is Jérôme Cormier. He is summoned by his friend who is going to be killed during an attack in World War I, to become a priest in his place, although without any vocation and partly entangled in a serious love story. The half promise weighing on his conscience and the encouragement of his confessor make Jérôme accept the priesthood as a consenting, happy, and triumphant "victim."

In spite of, or better, with, his constructed and doubtful cases, Baumann made the Catholic reading public restless. Although he erroneously lowered the cases of higher spirituality to a banal level, he showed for the first time almost against his will that serious problems in spirituality cannot get a wholesale and easy-going solution. Accordingly, his stylistic expression is not sure of itself; it is characterized by slow procedure, introduction of heavy sentences by many anticipated adverbial circumstances, very detailed descriptions dragging the author to the boundaries of suggestive language and overstressed sinful situations. Choosing complicated cases, he has to work with insertions. Trying to create a Catholic atmosphere, he expounds spiritual history, literature, art at an unbearable length. His strength consists in his stirring and passionate dialogues. When the modern Job tries to win over his wife, she answers: "Trop songer à Dieu est au-dessus de mes forces," a laconic remark which will destroy the wedlock of the pious man. Pauline Ardel's father prevents her from joining the Church with the remark, "The only true paradise is the paradise of labor and thought" to which Pauline Ardel's suffering fiancé gives the overwhelming answer. These contrasts of words and deeds bring the Catholic spirit to unexpected triumphs.

VIII

CLAUDEL

Baumann's failure to distinguish between genuine higher and lower spiritual levels became apparent after Paul Claudel had published in 1910 his *Cinq grandes odes*, and made the *apostolic Christocentricity and Divine Love* in him, a converted witness, the key to all individual, collective, and cultural problems.⁹ The inseparability of love from sacrifice on a whole gamut of levels makes Claudel convincingly true. The great odes contain his dramas in embryo. In the first ode called *Les Muses* and in an early play, *Le repos du septième jour* (1901), Claudel expresses the idea that the pagans may have had some awareness of Catholic truth and that certain persons among them may have been granted the extraordinary grace of a private revelation. In *Magnificat*, the second ode, we read his jubilation on being freed from darkness and led to faith in Christ's Redemption which brings to the individual, truth, as opposed to the idols of antiquity or of modern non-Christian civilizations. These idols were first encountered when Claudel translated the Greek tragedies of Aeschylus, and were exposed by him in his play *La ville* where he took to task the idol of a lay state, and in *L'échange*, where he branded the idol of capitalism.

In the drama, *L'annonce faite à Marie* (1912) his *Magnificat* resounds again in the idea that the Christocentricity of the Middle Ages permits an extension of the Incarnation into single souls, convents, villages, countries, and all Catholic Europe.

In *Le soulier de satin* (1929), the *Magnificat* has a still greater echo. There, at the very time when the idols of the Renaissance and Reformation were ravaging Europe, Christ redeemed the Negroes and Indians of the new continents of Africa and America through the work of Spanish and Portuguese missionaries. The third great ode is *La muse qui est la grâce*. This Christian Muse is not so easy to follow: wooing the Christian, she offers him sacrifice, self-surrender, detachment, in short the folly of the cross.' This theme also has its variations in the same great drama. Violaine who accepts this Muse is led by her to a superhuman charity which makes her embrace a leper and contract his terrible disease herself. Rejected by her lover, Jacques Hury, who suspects that her contagion is the result of infidelity and impurity, she withdraws to the desert where she becomes blind and finally is fatally wounded by her jealous and revengeful sister, Mara. The grace she gets is two-fold: first, to approach the love of Christ by giving up her earthly love under unimaginable suffering, and second, to use the charisma of raising the dead to the advantage of her sister's child who for this service of a supernatural order, only hates her the more.

Doña Prouhèze, heroine of *Le soulier de satin*, is another saint in the making because she accepts the "Muse that is Grace." Married without love to an older man, the nobleman, Don Pelagio, she falls in love with young Don Rodrigo. When she is setting out to meet Don Rodrigo, her Catholic instinct tells her to put her satin slipper in the hands of a statue of Our Lady at the gate, so that if she runs into temptation she may run with a halting foot. But Rodrigo is appointed viceroy in America and she herself at the canny wish of her husband is appointed ambassador to Nogador. There she is exposed to the will of the unattractive commander Camillo. Doña Prouhèze has to marry him after her husband's death to prevent his apostasy to Mohammedanism, although her love for Don Rodrigo, whom she now was free to marry, tortures her night and day. Rodrigo after a fatal delay, comes as a general to take Camillo to task and to set Prouhèze free. She has the strength by grace to surrender only her little daughter, remaining herself to be blown up with her legitimate husband by her lover so very dear to her. But she, too, fulfilled a mission by her own heroism: she made Rodrigo a saint who, disgraced by the king, dies rejoicing in the utmost poverty.

And so all the Christocentric souls in Claudel's dramas understand that earthly love can never be fulfilled and that it is only a way, a means of reaching the jumping off place from which the search for the real spouse begins. This springs most explicitly from *La cantate à trois voix* (1913). A Christocentric world uses all means, including persecution and hardships, to win Christ's love and to spread Christ's doctrine.

All these highly mysterious topics are expressed with an ironical contempt for the simple reader who is puzzled by the crude comparisons, the willful interpretations of Biblical passages, the mixing up of climates and continents, reality and dream, street gossip and liturgical solemnity, insolent remarks which in their triumphant faith seem blasphemous to the spiritual weakling. Claudel's stylistic tool is the paradox: "Dans mon néant j'existe." The word-play does not shrink from covering the most sacred statements: "Il faut subir . . . Quelqu'un qui soit en moi plus moi-même que moi." The fine balancing between the abstract and the concrete makes this linguistic revolutionary a real classic. His unique rhythms move between awe and tenderness, solemnity and coo-

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ing familiarity with God, mystical outcries and terre-à-terre statements: "Son cri in-tarissable en moi comme une eau qui fuse et qui déferle." Claudel's style is truly obscure, but it is the expression of the darkness of the Faith, more luminous than any discursive clarity. It is the way of "sensing" the spiritual: "Nous sommes avec ces deux mains partout du potier spirituel" (*Un poète regarde la croix*). The unicity of Claudel's symbolism is its thorough information by Biblical and liturgical symbolism which makes the poet's modern and poetical means vibrant and profound.

IX

LE CARDONNEL

In 1912 an unheard of tone came into the *Renouveau Catholique* with Louis Le Cardonnel's (1862-1936) *Carmina Sacra*.¹⁰ The new theme was the *spiritual problems of the secular priest*. The theme was taken up again later by the poet-priests René Fernandat, Camille Melloy and François Ducaud-Bourget. Their common problem is the ordinary inability of the secular priest to reach the self-sanctification possible to the monk and the nun, while his mission is nevertheless to sanctify others. Of course, his functions are liturgical and not mystical; he serves primarily the parish and not the garden of his own soul. Yet sacerdotal poetry is aware of the priest's danger of being drowned by a kind of routine and ritualism, if he himself does not reach, through his particular contact with the Sacraments and the Divine, certain ascetical heights in his personal life.

Le Cardonnel's cry: *Excelsior* in this sense is a prayer to the martyr bishop St. Ephrem:

Ephrem, obtiens pour nous la tendresse du coeur
La grâce de lever le Christ de mains pures,
La douceur qui rayonne et l'austère vigueur,
Le fond de pénétrer au fond des Ecritures.

Or he prays for the grace of a full surrender, aware of all the implications:

Chaque jour un peu plus, mon Dieu; que de moi-même,
Je ne fasse qu'un vide où Vous deveniez tout

Seigneur, amenez-moi parmi les thérébinthes.

(*L'attente mystique*)

Finally he prays to St. Teresa in her own words to help him to "graver . . . les âpres siéras de la perfection":

O Thérèse, aide-nous à mieux remplir nos tâches,
A vaincre en ces hasards qu'il nous reste à courir,
Nous, les chrétiens du siècle, aimant son joug et lâches,
Nous qui ne mourons pas de ne pouvoir mourir.

In Le Cardonnel's verses will be found a curious well-balanced quiet of simplicity, classical rhythms, and humanistic tendencies which seem at odds with the mystical yearnings expressed, and appear sometimes fused in wondrous words and sophisticated allusions ("Toi que Dante a nommé une perle éternelle" *i.e.* the moon).

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X

DUCAUD-BOURGET AND FERNANDAT

François Ducaud-Bourget (born 1897) makes Le Cardonnel's problem stronger, more austere, and in a very direct language extremely serious:

Afin que je puisse sans trêve
Donner aux autres mon appui

J'accepte mon atonie
Mon dégoût, cet écoeurement,
Car pour jeter la paix au monde
Il faut gémir en soi le cri du Golgotha.

But there is perhaps the greatest consolation in the *Kyrie Eleison* which the Valéry-critic and priest René Fernandat (Abbé L. Genet, born 1884)¹¹ addresses to the Lord for his parishoners, written in an ascetic sincerity:

Seigneur je suis l'interprète fidèle
De la douleur qui se traîne ici-bas
Et cherche en vain le refuge d'une aile;
Je prends ce mal dans mes bras toujours las,
Puisque je suis l'image du Sauveur
Et je vous l'offre, en vous priant, Seigneur.

En votre coeur je dépose les peines
Et les soupirs des poitrines humaines.
(*Les signets du missel*)

XI

JAMMES

In 1912, Francis Jammes (1868-1938), with his *Géorgiques Chrétiennes*, imitating Virgil's *Georgics*, inaugurates something like a *Catholic poetry of nature* by definitely spiritualizing Nature.¹² To understand what is at issue here, one has to realize that up till then there was only one type of non-pagan nature poetry, hymns praising the Creator through the nature which He created. The Psalms and the *Song of the Creatures* of Saint Francis of Assisi are the best examples. The other types of nature poetry are pagan by definition, because they are satisfied with nature alone. The nature poet either turns pantheistic under polytheistic symbols or he restrains himself to a non-symbolic admiration of the peasants' work throughout the seasons and lets nature fill him to the exclusion of the metaphysical and even of God. Jammes, who had always been a neo-pagan poet, attempts after his reconversion to graft the supernatural on nature, the seasons of the ecclesiastical year on those of the natural year. He grafts the feasts of the Church on the high tides of peasant life and work, and baptizes the rural life which was once sung by Virgil. His enterprise reminds one a little of an impossible Christian shepherd mythology standing in competition with the pagan mythology, but it is made tolerable and even charming by a Franciscan attitude of naïveté. Furthermore, this grafting of Christian truth on pagan phantoms was the practice of the Church itself when in the

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course of the early Christian centuries she grafted Christian feasts on pagan festivals of sowing, fertility, harvest, the equinoxes, and the awakening and dying of nature. But Jammes does more: he considers the supernatural like a superlative of the natural with an unusual spiritual sensuousness; whereas the words are just *L'église, habillée de feuilles*, the Blessed Sacrament conversely is *Ce souffle des fins-fonds des matins et des soirs, Qui vit réellement au coeur de L'ostensoir*.

Now the artistic method of Francis Jammes is the continuous fusion of rural nature with the supernatural. A simple, rustic prayer joined to the eating and drinking of the peasants, void of any higher spirituality or metaphysical problem, the relation between the vegetation and the ecclesiastical feasts in a hundred details—these are his main concerns.

A decided poetical infantilism open to excellent observation of animals, flowers, and brooks marks his style. The birds' longing for a warm country in Fall without ever having seen it reminds of man's desire for heaven. The Blessed Virgin herself, a refreshing water, and mother of a Poor Child, was bound to descend at Lourdes and talk to little Bernadette:

C'est près du vert torrent, dans le coin d'une grotte,
Que la Vierge, vêtue de neige et de ciel bleu,
Comme une eau descendue d'une céleste roche
Jasa vers un enfant pauvre comme son Dieu.

Heaven materializes for Jammes in his own Pyrenees where the spiritual is linked to the details of the landscape by a new peasant vocabulary rich in shades and fancies down to the very animals in this earthly paradise.

XII

NOEL

Jammes, nevertheless, has not given a convincing proof of the possibility of a Catholic nature-poetry. Such a poetry has to make clear that the very sap and force and blood of the earth can lead to God instead of leading away from Him. This direction was indicated by Marie Noël (Mlle. Rouget, born 1883). She shows a way to the Divine through hallowed maternity as self-effacing sacrifice. She can easily find the way from motherhood to mysticism by her leitmotif: *selfsurrender and unconditional love of God*. Her *Eve* realizes, indeed, that a mother who through her suckling babe experiences, "la douceur d'être mangée" can easily grasp the saint's absorption in God "la douceur de mourir" and from the experience "D'être la gorgée émouvante qui glisse et m'entraîne toute en mon petit changée," she understands the mystical surrender: "Mourir, m'évader de cette solitude":

De ce moi qui tient ma richesse captive
Pour te rejoindre, ô soif qui cherches l'eau vive,
Et calmer à ton besoin ma plénitude.

This mystical love—certainly the "anagogical" sense of *Eve*—each Catholic mother can learn from her relation to her baby.

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The thus self-effaced soul dreams of a heaven different from Jammes' donkey paradise. She dreams of heaven as did Ruysbroeck or St. John of the Cross:

Je ferai si peu d'ombre, ô Dieu, dans ta lumière
Que bien sûr,
Les saints ne me verront pas plus qu'une poussière
Dans l'azur.
Mais Toi qui me verras en Toi comme une tache
Nuit et jour,
Si j'offense ta vue, à son refuge arrache
Mon amour.

(*Les chansons et les heures*)

Marie Noël begs joy from God only to impart it in poetry to others and is ready to restitute it whenever God wills: "Demain, ce soir, tout de suite, quand tu voudras." Clarity, natural expression, comparisons to the point, depth, every day words arranged tastefully, witness to Marie Noël's beautiful sincerity.

XIII

PSICHARI

One can understand mystical love from analogy discovered even in military service. In 1916 Ernest Psichari's (1883-1914) book *Le voyage du Centurion*, published posthumously, revealed together with the conversion story of this grandson of Ernest Renan, something like a *comparative apologetics* quite new to non-Catholics and Agnostics: the higher value of Catholicism as compared to Mohammedanism.¹⁴ This truth was not so obvious to the young lieutenant, Maxence, when he came from Paris to the desert to take charge of a detachment of Islamic Arabs in order to pacify Mauretania.

In the Catholic city of Paris it was the most normal thing in the world to live in the vice of Montmartre where Moulin Rouge exhibited its sins a few yards from the Church of the Sacred Heart where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed continuously day and night; but in the desert Maxence found his Moslem orderlies and guides devoured by religious questions; he encountered the contemplatives, those dreamers of the desert whose fasting gnawed at the flesh and refined the heart and from whom arose the great cry of prayer, "Laila illah," God is great. It was difficult for the young officer to answer the religious questions of these Arabs. He was well aware that he was confronted with the holy exaltation of the spirit, the contempt for earthly goods, the knowledge of the things essential. He himself, on the other side, belonged to the satisfied ones, those content with themselves, the men with broad grins and big bellies. Maxence received from these miserable people, from these heretics who were prisoners of their heresy, a terrible lesson which challenged him to a personal struggle for the Christian conviction when he found himself alone with God in the desert. Islamic superiority seemed unacceptable to him for two reasons. First, as a soldier who understood by nature that the sacrifice of life is by all means the highest form of sacrifice, he felt repelled by the Islamic idea that the study of the Koran is superior to martyrdom. Secondly, he saw clearly that all this high asceticism and prayer did not reach the distant God because this sacrifice lacked charity. There was no divine object to be loved, embraced, touched, felt, experienced,

no charity to embrace in God all mankind as brethern and children of a common loving Father.

Maxence discovered that the Church, though full of sinners, has ascetics and contemplatives who can stand against the Moslems and do stand against his own life. Struggling hard and helped by grace, Maxence finds himself approaching Christ as a French soldier approaches his general (*oui, mon général*) without reserve, humble and confident. He is Captain of Capharnaum, the captain under the cross, the captain Cornelius. Yes, he is fighting for Christ (not only for France), like the crusaders fought against Islam. He understands his mission and finally can answer these Arabs, that he can pray to a person, namely to Jesus Christ, the mediator, the Second Person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, True Man and True God, Jesus Christ, God of mercy and of love. All this is told in a sharply analytical, military though enthusiastic, style with glimpses of landscapes and sketches of people.

XIV

GHEON

In 1920, four years after his reconversion, Henry Ghéon (1875-1944) published his greatest drama, *Le saint sous l'escalier*.¹⁵ His merit is that he attempted to lead the people to spirituality by retelling the lives of saints in stories and dramas. Certain critics praise highly his most popular plays which were nevertheless ignored by the serious stage, because, in spite of the author's upright and Catholic enthusiasm, they give the impression of superstition and sanctimoniousness. Ghéon is more serious when he modernizes the psychological problem of old legends. In *Le pauvre sous l'escalier* Ghéon retells the old French legend of Saint Alexis who leaves his bride on his wedding night in response to a gift of grace which bids him leave without consummating his marriage. He lives for seventeen years as a beggar in a church in Edessa and then returns for another period of seventeen years to the house of his own father where he lives unknown under the staircase in a kind of doghouse, while his parents and his bride upstairs still complain of the absence of their beloved one. After his death, a scroll found with the saint reveals his story and his sanctity.

Ghéon has changed the plot in a very daring psychological way. Here the saint, after his return, probably in order to enhance his power of renunciation, used to meet his bride, called Emilie, in order to talk to her and to dissuade her from yielding to one of her suitors. Of course, Emilie has an awareness that it is Alexis who is talking to her, but she is silent about that. The saint on a conscious level tries to hinder Emilie from falling to a lower degree of Christian life by a new marriage, after she has once understood the meaning of Alexis' flight and even approved of it. But in his subconscious a little jealousy may still prevail—so difficult is it to become a saint. Self analysis actually reveals to Alexis that his chats with Emilie do not strengthen but rather weaken his renunciation and he finally must advise her not to meet him any more. In this way Ghéon has modernized the old epic by an amazing hide-and-seek of temptation and renunciation on the highest level. In other words, Ghéon has discovered that with passion and temptation and renunciation, a drama stands and falls and that a drama of a saint cannot be different from the drama of a sinner, unless it takes place in mystical realms

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where the dramatic partner is God. With his dramatic skill of stagecraft Ghéon combines a lively dialogue and gives the miraculous a hazy-ironical atmosphere.

XV

MAURIAC

One of the greatest literary events was François Mauriac's (born 1885) *Le baiser au lépreux*, 1922.¹⁶ Here Mauriac found his fundamental theme that *the compromises of a Catholic society with sin* make unbearable suffering for Christians aiming at perfection and insolvable tragedy for the average Catholic who is tangled in sins and yet scandalized by them. Mauriac is scandalized the more as "a new Christian Hamlet." He is well aware of all the virtual sins and crimes in himself. This keynote appeared again in its most classical form in *Destinées* (1928), *Le noeud de vipères* (1932), and *La Pharisienne*. Mauriac's suffering is real, his Catholicism is sincere, his horror of sin is palpable. The society of his country, the Gascogne, Bordeaux and the Landes, maintain the traditional Catholic standards in a kind of formalistic folk-lore backed by *étiquette*. Its faith is a phantom; its morals are very low, particularly in respect to money and the flesh. This society making bold to buttress the Church, in reality is her gravedigger. There are only some rare souls who, in spite of everything, testify in the midst of this decay to the truth and purity of the Church. All the mischief of men, according to Mauriac, comes from their unwillingness to remain chaste; a chaste humanity, he contends, would not know most of the evils which overwhelm us. Yet, a small number of individuals who have subdued the heart and the blood in a sovereign way bear witness that happiness in this world is the fruit of renunciation and charity. There is one other faint hope—that the impure may become purified more by trusting Christ's Grace and Charity than by trusting a society which cannot help losing its soul precisely because it is passionately attached to temporal goods. Such is the case with the beautiful Noémi d'Artiailh whom the pastor persuades to marry the ugly and distorted hunchback Jean Peloueyre in order to unite the wealth of the two families. Seeing that Noémi finds it physically impossible to touch the ugly mate, the pastor sends him to Paris so that both young people may have some relief. When Peloueyre returns after having tried in vain to have a good time, Noémi discovers that her husband, secretly cherishing a wish to liberate her of his presence, has contracted tuberculosis from a sick friend whom he has been visiting. This desperate action of her husband gives Noémi the grace of real love, of Christian charity. So in the weeks before his death, often when he feigned to sleep, she got up and gave him kisses, kisses like those the lips of saints once imprinted on the lepers. Thus, on the level of charity which has nothing in common with the flesh, this marriage finds its "consummation." Noémi as a widow has spiritually grown so much that in spite of her youth, she refuses the hand of the young doctor who would be the ideal husband according to human standards. So still the seed of an ancient Catholic civilization growing among the weeds, produces a plant worthy of its stock.

Persons like Noémi who struggle for and with grace in desperate situations—and after many defeats—are rare. In *Destinées*, the widow Elizabeth, in spite of all her devotions, falls in love with young Bob Lagave. After his accidental death, she realizes her entire loneliness and even loses her faith. Her son, Pierre, who probably caused

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this by his fanatic rigorism, may be able to pray her back into the fold after he has become a monk. In *Le noeud de vipères*, the father, Louis, becomes more and more estranged from Catholicism, confronted as he is with a wife and children who for all their Catholic routine have not a spark of charity in their hearts. These vipers might have caused their father's damnation had not a truly charitable priest like a meteor enlightened for a short moment his life.

The Pharisienne, who keeps a record of her progress in perfection, has no charity either. She is a leader in Catholic organizations but a catastrophe in her own family and her devout circles, where she ruins, by absurd denunciations and misgivings, her step-children, her husband, a brave priest, a teacher, a seamstress and a young nobleman. Nevertheless, because of the hardships she makes them endure, she gives the seamstress, the teacher, and the priest indirectly a great chance to become saints. She herself, albeit in a ridiculous way, has to fall in love at fifty with an old doctor in order to learn what love is like and so to get a glimpse of a possible gateway to charity.

Mauriac, in spite of some of his adverse Catholic critics, certainly is an author who works entirely from his faith; he has proved this by many theoretical writings. From his faith springs his enormous love of the Eucharist, his yearning for purity, and his imposing Catholic personality which always "essaie de rendre sensible, tangible, odorant, l'univers catholique du mal" (*Journal*).

His style is so imposingly analytical, his nature descriptions so beautifully overwhelming, his grouping of persons and situations so fascinating because of their truth and lucidity, that he might be considered the only pupil of Marcel Proust in France today. For Mauriac, too, nourishes his present with a transfigured past. His cruder scenes are convincingly put into the service of "purifier la source." Multiple exclamations, critical epithets and metaphors, apostrophes, abrupt changes in tenses, arousing images betray the author's vibration behind his work. Characters and environments are marvelously fused, and there is always a truly poetical veil upon the x-rayed reality. Even his monotonously repeated situations, details, events, and epithets are strong; they are monotonous like the sin which they illustrate, but the variation comes from the varied rhythms of the sentences and the precise individual features in the generally repeated motifs which do not shrink from caricatural exaggerations.

XVI

BERNANOS

The year 1926 brought a still greater Catholic literary event: Georges Bernanos' (1888-1948) *Sous le soleil de Satan* followed by other similar novels: *L'imposture* (1927), *La joie* (1929), and *Le journal d'un curé de campagne* (1936).¹⁷ The contribution of Bernanos is a *genuine mysticism fully understood*, which helps him to analyze the psyche of saints through their troubles, trials, and dark nights of the soul. He does not make the slightest concession to pseudo-moral and educational tendencies and compromises, and he satisfies fully the student of mystical theology. After World War I it was clear to this French and Catholic Dostoevski that the world, having abandoned Christ, had come under "the star of Satan." Father Donissan, a country priest and second

pastor of Ars, is very much advanced in the spiritual life. He has visions and illuminations but under the poor direction of another country priest he does not recognize his spiritual situation. Boundless in love, he almost makes a vow to offer his eternal bliss for that of his parishioners, and he fights desperately against Satan who is trying to win him over. Priests who meet him either humble themselves before his saintliness and deplore their own lives, or they fight against him by joining and appeasing the liberal world in declaring Donissan a pathological case rather than admitting their own failure.

In *L'imposture*, Abbé Cénabre, a rationalistic priest, investigates mysticism out of curiosity, becomes an apostate, and would have become a prey to Satan if Abbé Chevance had not been able to atone for him by way of vicarious suffering and a death of dereliction reminding one of Christ's death on the cross.

Abbé Chevance's penitent, the charming and happy little Chantal, is the heroine of *La joie*. She is, as it seems, a saint of the easy going kind, that of religious pictures if such a thing were possible. Her father believes her simply to be ill and would like to have her psychoanalyzed by a doctor, Abbé Cénabre helping with his enlightenment. Only a Russian emigrant who spies on her knows the secret of her levitations. He cannot tolerate this angelic purity and kills her. Her death is even more outrageous than that of Father Chevance because her corpse and that of the Russian are found together, and the purest of the pure suspected that she has had love relations with him, but Chantal's death adds its redeeming vicarious power to that of Father Chevance to force from the lips of the stricken Father Cénabre, the words, "Our Father."

Bernanos' strength is his irreproachable psychology in these high spiritual matters where no one can come to any convincing conclusions unless he has a special charisma but where everyone can observe with more or less skill. His more human book, *Le journal d'un curé de campagne*, where the extraordinary and the supernatural are entirely hidden, is the most difficult. Here there are only the slightest indications that this priest also reaches the heights of spirituality by his brave and loving holocaust. He is poor, suffering from cancer, misunderstood by his parishioners, misunderstood by his bishop, misunderstood by his confrères. Preoccupied with only his sacerdotal duties, he does a splendid apostolic work in a parish of Catholics who have forgotten the essence of faith and morality. He dies a terrible death stricken in the town house of an apostate priest whose mistress assists him in his death agony and even sends for a priest who comes too late. These books of Bernanos are true to the very marrow and try to make clear that high spirituality among priests and laymen does exist but is really endangered by the sugar-coated pseudo-religiosity of a bourgeois Catholicism.

Bernanos' stylistic strength consists in the spell he casts by taking the supernatural surreptitiously into every phase of the natural life by a mysterious fragmentation of the events full of profound gaps and silences, by the constant use of surprising similes which are decidedly discoveries of wondrous "correspondence," and by the ever repeated "cela qui" construction which reminds the reader of the real presence of the numinous. He is ever insisting, threatening, buttonholing the reader by canny leitmotifs (the used pair of shoes of Mr. Donissan, for instance, and emotional-critical repetitions to tell him the supernatural is the hidden solution for the open problems of life. By bitter ironical statements and a contempt for everything not leading to saintliness or at least to justice

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and right he makes war upon those not ready for God. Therefore he works with tremendous, thought-arousing contests of darkness and light, sadness and bliss.

XVII

MARCEL

After this terrifying Catholic criticism by Mauriac and Bernanos destined primarily for the inner circle of Catholics, there was wanting a treatment of the *fertile dialogue possible between Catholics and non-Catholics* who are sympathetic with the core of Christianity. This value was evident in the works of the dramatist and philosopher Gabriel Marcel, particularly in his dram. *Le mort de demain* (1931).¹⁸ Gabriel Marcel (born 1887) experienced the fact that the non-Catholic world has become deaf and blind not only to the Catholic truths of faith and morals, but even to the traditional scholastic method of conveying these truths to the people. Catholics may repeat in vain the technical proofs for the existence of God or the immortality of the soul. In an age of atheism and communism few are ready to accept them. Consequently, says Marcel, believers and unbelievers alike have to agree that there are certain mysteries in life in which we are all so deeply and passionately involved that we are not able to treat them as merely academic problems. We have to embrace them in mutual love and understanding. All great tragedies of life contain such mysteries. Marcel, consequently, presents dramas as mysterious cases very similar to the themes of Mauriac and Bernanos, cases which witness the primacy of the spiritual and therefore represent religious values in kind.

The above mentioned drama *Le mort de demain* may be considered a challenge to Raynal's liberal drama, the *Tombeau sous l'Arc de Triomphe*. Raynal's play glorified the action of a bride who in full mastery of her person gave herself to a soldier fiancé in order to make him happy and bear him a child in view of his almost certain death in an impending attack on the battle front. Marcel has clearly recognized that the justification for the bride's action can lie only in a philosophical belief in an eternal life composed of a chain of generations and only such a belief can make this supposed bliss so imperative. And so he writes his answer in *Le mort de demain*: a married woman tries to refuse herself to her soldier-husband on furlough from the battle-front, because she believes that procreation has no place in face of death. She renounces her hope of a higher spiritual level for him only when he, the dead man of tomorrow, refuses on his side to understand the mystery concerning him and her. The curious attempt made in this plot can be understood on a natural level by every non-biased person. Mysteries of this sort *do* exist—the mystery of death and its undeniable promises and menaces, the mystery of chastity as a predisposition to confront God. In another play, *Le chemin de crête*, a poor consumptive woman writes a diary of renunciation and forgives her husband and his mistress, but then this curious "saint," still living, lets a reporter get hold of the diary and proves by just this that she is simply a ridiculous and proud woman in a pitiful situation. This play has, according to G. Marcel himself, an importance by principle: it is a reflection about saintliness with all its concrete attributes; it is the very introduction to ontology because through saintliness alone the threatening presence of death is nullified in this life and changed into plenitude which is participation in the true Being itself. The real saint is Mirelle in *La chapelle ardente*. Out of pure charity

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Mirelle becomes the wife of the incurable André Verdet. She is his aiding, loving angel until he dies, although the world scoffs at her and hates her. Her mother-in-law pursues her by jealousy even after André's death.

The tragic consequences of an attack on the sacredness of the human personality, as the Church teaches it, are worked out in *Le coeur des autres*. Here an author puts into a play the possible love relations between his son and his wife, the son's step-mother, thus poisoning the innocent personalities of both of them and ruining the family.

The importance of this Christian existentialist, Gabriel Marcel, consists in the fact that his mysteries of life are everybody's mysteries, but the Church alone has the key of Faith to open them and the sacraments and the charity to help individuals adjust to them and confidently face them, thus putting people on the way to possible sanctity and salvation. Not with the extremes of Bloy or Huysmans, not with Baumann's constructions nor even with Claudel's sometimes opera-like Catholic demonstrations, but with Mauriac's, Bernanos', and Marcel's challenging and direct analyses of sin and sanctity, the non-Catholic world has been reached; and for the first time in centuries, as far as the intelligentsia is concerned, those outside the faith have been put on the defensive—not to speak of the conversions that occurred as a result of these books.

Marcel's dramatic language is most *terre-à-terre*, conversational. If you take the mystery-idea out of the dramas, you think you're reading a continuer of Porto-Riche, Hervieu, Brieux.

XVIII

THREE CRITICS

In the field of challenge and leadership a very high rank is due also to the great Catholic critics who by principle go Marcel's way of a discussion of and with the non-Catholics. I think it worthwhile to stress the values of at least three of them. The first is Henri Massis (born 1886), old fighter against the Sorbonne and the liberal spirit of France.¹⁹ He made clear that the Catholic critic, though not approving of non-Catholic literature, at least can understand it by a kind of regretting *sympathy with the unwilling error* and plight of the author, which he knows are due to conditions under which the writer worked. We have to note that such a large and noble attitude would never be possible for a materialistic critic who does not admit at all of the spiritual values of the Catholic. Massis was to recognize the relative merits of Marcel Proust (*Le drame de Proust*, 1937) as a writer and psychologist, though he regretted the godless and amoralistic picture he presents to the world and his romantic outlook which seems to Proust himself rather a wisdom, a discovery, nay even a new religion. Therefore Massis, in his remarks about the drama of Marcel Proust, gave us a criticism informed by a spirit of tolerance and empathy. He did the same work on Proust as René Fernandat did on Valéry. Massis finds that in the same degree as the abdication of the will is complete, a work appears as the very order of despair. Proust symbolizes to him man resting on mortal sin for whom the human personality in its essence does escape.

His method is a careful analysis with sharp conclusions couched in strong language. This language gives sometimes, though this be a mirage, the impression of intolerance.

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The second critic is Charles Du Bos (1882-1939).²⁰ To him we owe the clarification and definition of what actually is a Catholic novelist (*Mauriac et le problème du romancier catholique*). A *romancier catholique* does not demonstrate directly what is right and good and what should and would happen if there were no original sin and no bad Christian—this was the temptation of Bazin, Bordeaux, and other "harmless" writers. The Catholic novelist is an analyzer of real life not different from any other novelist in his fundamental task, but his comment between the lines is *guided by charity*, rather than cynicism, by pity and artistic necessity rather than "delectatio morosa." If guided by charity and sincerity his descriptions will do no harm to the mature reader, because in him will be aroused not the flesh, but rather, in the Aristotelian sense, his own humility, his compassion with fellow-sinners, his pity and fear, which drive him to embrace the cross and to cry for mercy for all the tortured and tempted sinners in the world, and last but not least for himself. There is no casuist in the world who can tell the Catholic novelist working with pure hands and a clean heart where to stop his art, which must follow laws of its own. The novelist's task is rather to help in the formation of a Catholic conscience and this is also the method of Du Bos' criticism in *Approximations*. The style of Du Bos is of a supersensible preciosity, a super-refined minor tune making his serious religiousness appear a little mellow, and against the author's intention selfcentered by repeating and re quoting constantly his earlier statements and commenting on them as though they were Biblical or classical quotations.

The third critic is Abbé Henri Bremond (1865-1933).²¹ He told the world what poetry is, and he told it as a Catholic theologian. Poetry is not self-liberation, it is not play, it is not entertainment, it is a kind of prayer. It is not a means of discovering particular truths or making religious revelations in prophetic rapture. It is something like a natural mysticism, a synthetic and intuitive glance at the world denied to all mortals except the poets. It translates itself into exquisite language, so much devoid of rational and discursive elements that even the stage of pure poetry, *i.e.* a word-music of mere suggestions, can be reached. This excellent and I dare say, acknowledged theory came to Bremond as a natural *analogy to Christian supernatural mysticism*. The intuitions and flash-like visions of the mystics have been studied through the centuries, also by Bremond in his *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux*, but those of the poets have been neglected although the great poets themselves, Dante as well as Shakespeare, were well aware of such implications. Bremond, top-ranking connoisseur of the psychology of mystics and forms of piety, believed that he was giving a just interpretation and explanation of the unknown when he wrote an analysis of poetic inspiration by analogy with the mystical inspiration as the known in his famous little treatise on *Poésie et prière* (1926). Bremond writes in a captivating style full of picturesque analogies, with a most charming irony and with overwhelming clarity.

XIX

SUMMARY

The growth of the French Revival thus presents itself as an evolution with a convincing interior logic. Baudelaire, aware of the meaning behind the appearances, opens the gate to the supernatural, hinting at it by his enigmatic metaphors, but he condemns

in a much bolder way sin as the work of Satan in his epigrammatic, unequivocal sentences. Verlaine, because of his own experience of a real conversion, steps from the negative to the positive Christian aspects of life. With an astonishing grasp of things divine, he relearns what true prayer means and, in a style of effaced contours, pictures a cosmos with Christ as its luminous center and the *saeculum* at the periphery fading away and losing its tempting attractiveness. Verlaine's picture ignores, however, the necessary ascetic and militant character of a Catholic living in a repaganized, apostate, and hostile world. This gap is drastically filled by Léon Bloy who in a naturalistic style stresses the evangelical counsels and the obligation of renunciation and poverty. But Bloy does not see the theoretical strongholds of the modern world in the intellectual and moral sphere. The problems arising from the modern abstention from a spiritual interpretation of life or the recourse to science as the exclusive means of knowledge and to earthly happiness as the goal of mankind were faced by Paul Bourget. He handled the difficulties which arose from the crisis of divorce legislation as well as from Modernism by opposing the secular *romans à thèse* with clever Catholic ones which lack only the full psychological penetration.

The Church thus recognized superior, at least pragmatically, to the secular tenets, the time was ripe to rediscover her interior wealth and glory in the sacraments and the liturgy. Huysmans, deeply interested in medieval studies, writes his novels in an archaic style. In this way he becomes the champion of liturgical greatness and beauty. But this individualist fails to see the social implications of the liturgy as the "form" of the Mystical Body whose very essence is the communion of the faithful in the charity of Christ. To have emphasized this most essential problem for a reluctant modern Catholic society trapped by antisocial capitalism is the merit of Charles Péguy. He spontaneously established an analogy between natural socialism and supernatural solidarity. Thus he wanted to urge the leadership in the social question on the Catholics. His lack of doctrinal depth, however, in this matter gave Emile Bauman an opportunity for pondering on the dogma of the Communion of the Saints in a new type of spiritual novel where problems of grace, vicarious suffering, martyrdom, and radical surrender to God have been treated.

But it is rather Paul Claudel who has definitely seen that the spiritual problem *par excellence* which concerns the Love of God as well as the love of the neighbor is centered in sacrifice. Sacrifice is the most sincere expression of the imitation of Christ. It links personal asceticism to the heart of the liturgy. It is the drama of every Christian because its highest goal, the holocaust, never will be reached in a state below sanctity. Claudel's form therefore necessarily becomes tragedy and his style the liturgical style of the true Sacrifice. Claudel's sacrificial motif became a particular challenge to the prototypical *sacrificator*, the priest. It was, indeed, priest-poets who realized the tragic tension between their mission of sanctifying others and the lack of their own desired greater sanctification. Louis le Cardonnell was the first to voice this theme bashfully in too well chiseled alexandrines; Ducaud-Bourget and René Fernandat let pierce through their more direct language a loving, true suffering coming from this dilemma reminiscent of the Sainly Curé d'Ars.

After the recognition of such problems, Francis Jammes' attempt to baptize Nature can appear only as a rectification of his pantheistic poetry before his conversion. It is difficult genuinely to share his belief that the sinner can look at nature with Saint Francis' purified eyes. The more serious way to a Catholic nature poetry is shown by Marie Noël, who explains the meaning of Christianity "from sacrifice to bliss through selfsurrender" by the significance of a decisive aspect of life: motherhood, *i.e.* the mother's blissful sacrifice of her self to her child. Not less serious is Ernest Psichari's discovery of the unfriendly nature of desert and solitude as a true and genuine path that leads to God, not different from the way shown by Christ himself and the great anchorites, hermits, and monks.

Similar to Jammes' attempt at modernizing miracle plays, has been that of Henry Ghéon; the latter author has, however, refined with modern psychological methods the problem of weakness and temptation confronting even the saints. These methods used with sovereignty in the analysis of the Catholic rank and file entitled François Mauriac to give an x-ray picture of the modern French society called "bien pensante," but entangled in impurity, insincerity, greed and a soulless traditionalism. If nonetheless it appears redeemable, it is evidently so, because among the sinners inside the Church there is always the seed of the gospel and the aid of the sacraments which are bound to bring forth some fruit. The highest levels of spirituality where these fruits actually become self-evident are the object of analysis for Georges Bernanos whose scrutinizing skill in piercing the secrets of genuine mysticism led him to a worthy literary competition with contemporary technical mystical theology. Bernanos may therefore be considered the most typical Catholic author writing for those "qui intra sunt."

How to show, however, the non-Catholic world all those reinstated ideals of Catholicity through literature is rather the concern of Gabriel Marcel, the well known Christian existentialist philosopher. Putting in his plays a clear demarcation line between the problems and the mysteries of life, he practically enforces on everybody a decision as to the necessity of Faith. His empathetic discussion is also the way of the great Catholic critics, truly claiming leadership in this field by a brotherly understanding of the subjective achievements of writers who are objective in error by approaching their topics from their very own suppositions. Thus Massis could interpret Proust; Fernandat, Paul Valéry. With the very same method Charles Du Bos could discuss the liberty of the Catholic novelist, who can be directed by only the truth he possesses, his formed conscience, and his personal form of art. Henri Bremond, finally, was able to give the modern world a richer theory of poetry because of his theoretical knowledge of mysticism.

Thus, the way from Baudelaire's new awareness of the spiritual to Bremond's use of it as a *certitudo omni certitudine certior* means a triumphant growth and dissemination of modern and new aspects of the eternal Catholic truth through contemporary French literature.

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Three Lectures by Yves R. Simon

Condensed by the Editor

At the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Catholic Renaissance Society (on March 13-14, 1948 at Lewis Towers, Loyola University, Chicago) Dr. Yves Simon, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Notre Dame and recently appointed to the faculty of the University of Chicago, was the speaker. On the general subject "The Catholic Renaissance in France between the Two World Wars," he gave three lectures entitled "The Catholic Renaissance: Backgrounds and Problems," "Catholic Renaissance and Theology," and "Catholic Renaissance and Temporal Problems."

I

CATHOLIC RENAISSANCE: BACKGROUNDS AND PROBLEMS

The problems of the France of today have their roots in French religious and social history. To understand them one must realize, first of all, that France had no strong and pervasive Protestant movement as did Anglo-Saxon countries, although there are parallels in most "Roman" nations.

In France the Huguenot growth was primarily a sectional one which affected only a few provinces; it produced religious warfare which, indeed, disturbed French culture and society and left an anti-clerical germ in France, but in general it was less powerful than many people suppose. In the long perspective of history, therefore, one might say that in France there was never a really Protestant environment. In an essentially Catholic country the people tend to be either Catholic, real or nominal, or to lose all religion completely. It is significant to observe that the second group tends to be not merely non-religious, but anti-clerical and anti-religious.

Eighteenth century rationalism and the French Revolution had profound and lasting repercussions in the light of which contemporary France must be understood. Rationalism was allied with the rising middle class in opposition to the aristocracy and the clerical elements of French society. The Revolution was led by educated men of the Middle Class; some were atheists, many were deists, but as a whole they were indifferent to religion and could not understand the psychology of the religious man. They were thinkers who predicted that reasonable men would put an end to religion in a short time.

A serious clash between Church and State which was to last for 150 years arose from the Civil Constitution of the Clergy. Though only a few bishops took the oath to support it, a not inconsiderable number of the lower clergy did agree to uphold it. The Pope declared the oath wrong, and consequently most of the non-juring clergy were looked on as a fifth-column when France was invaded from without. Unfortunately it made Frenchmen feel that the attitude of the Church was irreconcilable with the whole

social reform program of the revolutionists. The Church was seemingly associated with the aristocracy and with the forces of reaction. This seeming-identification had long-lasting effects.

The socialist movements of the nineteenth century, starting with the 1830's, were for the most part extremely violent, anti-religious, and often they were also violently anti-Catholic.

For a time Napoleon III restored to the clergy some of their power, but they too often used it to stabilize their position. Further, it is to be remembered that there were many discontented elements which did not make much distinction between an unpopular government and Catholicism.

The victory of the legal government over the Commune of Paris in 1871 added further opposition to the Church. The Commune had been anti-religious in its program and was responsible for the murder of a number of priests and members of the hierarchy, including the Archbishop of Paris. The retaliation of the legal government was prompt and severe. People who had members of their families executed—and there were between twenty and thirty thousand of these—after the defeat of the Commune, obviously were not going to feel friendly to the Church and there was generated further resentment and desire for revenge on the part of anti-clericals and others.

There were still further anti-Catholic forces at work during the later decades of the nineteenth century. Leo XIII had advised the French Catholics to give up their hatred of the Republic and to try if possible to work within its framework, but whatever power this Encyclical might have had was erased and lost in the aftermath of the Dreyfus case. Dreyfus, not guilty, was supported by the leftist elements and the leftist press; Catholics were therefore driven into the anti-Dreyfus camp, and the victory of the pro-Dreyfus party placed Catholics in a very unfavorable light.

During the nineteenth century some of the bourgeois tended to become pro-clerical merely because of their opposition to socialism. The farmers very often were anti-clerical though this did not necessarily mean that they would not attend at least some Catholic services and even sacraments. The socialists without exception were anti-Catholic. Most of the intellectuals were agnostics.

The end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth were in France characterized by an almost unanimous opposition to the Church; this opposition involved a highly doctrine-minded people, but they were opposed to any and all religion.

Public life at the turn of the century could be characterized as completely abstracted from God. The schools were secularized and were manned by state-trained teachers who had an anti-religious attitude. The few Church schools that existed had slight influence.

Before secularization, nuns ran almost all the hospitals. Therefore men at least could die in a Catholic atmosphere. Then even that became impossible.

With the first World War religious tensions were relaxed. Anti-clerical forces had won secularism and were no longer so aggressive. Further, the war put an end to rationalistic optimism. This led some to want something much worse—but many returned to a consideration of the Church.

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II

CATHOLIC RENAISSANCE AND THEOLOGY

Catholic theological thought during the nineteenth century was at a low ebb though to the 1870's belongs the encyclical of Leo XIII urging thinkers to go to the school of St. Thomas Aquinas. This eventually was to have a deepening effect and finally produced such outstanding French Thomists as Gilson and Maritain. Yet even today in France Thomism does not carry as much weight as it rightfully should.

Even in the 1920's conditions in the state-run universities made it difficult for the intelligent Catholic student to maintain his faith. Bergsonism had not as yet been popularized, and positivism and pragmatism were extremely common.

There were very few laymen in the Catholic universities because of the laws of 1875 which meant that their degrees, a prerequisite for teaching positions and for the practice of the professions, were not recognized by the State. Examinations for recognized degrees were administered by the state-maintained universities. Professors at the Catholic universities which did exist were poorly paid. The equipment and libraries were inadequate.

This situation has by no means been solved, though the establishment of the Institut Catholique at the University of Paris heralded a new era. It brought Maritain to some students; listening to him they heard the best of Thomistic philosophy, but Maritain was opposed by many people and his followers were few. The Thomist movement has failed to win in the state universities nor, at least in the immediate future, is it likely to win the state university. Thomism has not, then, affected the general educational system of France.

At the present there is to be observed a good deal of vitality among Catholic theologians, though the degree of their devotion to the spirit of St. Thomas varies widely. Most significant among the Jesuits is De Lubac who is associated with the new school of theology near Lyons. Especially important among the Dominicans is Garrigou-LaGrange at the Angelicum. The Dominican school at Saulchoir, historically a product of the persecution, is powerful. Outstanding among the periodicals are such organs as *Le Vie Intellectuelle* and *La Vie Spirituelle* as well as the volumes of *Etudes Carmelitaines*.

There are, too, more eclectic interests, notably the Scotist inspiration of the Franciscans, the Suarezian interests of some Jesuits, and the Catholic existentialism of Gabriel Marcel.

Throughout the present renaissance there runs the difficulty of determining just what position of importance and significance the study of St. Thomas is to take, the temptation to confuse theology and philosophy as well as theological and apologetic approaches and solutions. Very important must be the realization that theology cannot be a science unless it uses philosophical terminology. Eventually it is scientific theology which fosters and stabilizes religious thought.

The widespread interest in theology, mysticism, liturgy, and religious psychology, the notable conversions to the Faith—all this has meant that there has been an increase

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in Catholicism and that this growth has been aided, in great part, by the work of Catholic intellectuals.

III

CATHOLIC RENAISSANCE AND TEMPORAL PROBLEMS

In the past most royalists or those with royalist leanings were of the Catholic tradition—even if they were not necessarily good Catholics. The pro-royalist movement was especially popular among students just before the first World War in which its adherents fought valiantly; its newspaper *L'Action française*, active against both real and imaginary betrayal, made a great impression.

In the 1920's almost all Catholic students and many of the intellectuals were attracted to *l'Action française*. Its newspaper was pleasant to read and was full of literary delights. Many believed that only a king could rid France of secularism. Eventually membership in *l'Action française* was prohibited by ecclesiastical authorities and the newspaper placed on the Index. Many of the followers revolted and became very anti-clerical. Finally some gave up their errors; others stopped reading the paper but read similar organs; some continued to read it and even found dissolute priests to absolve them.

Later, after the German occupation, the Vichy government became a rallying point for many rightist elements.

On the other hand, Christian democratic movements, with their roots in the closing years of the nineteenth century, were deeply concerned with social conditions and ardent in their advocacy of democracy. One of the movements, *Le Sillon*, was condemned by the Papacy in 1910 for errors of modernism; submission was complete and voluntary. The "*Jeune-République*" is one of the active remnants that survived.

The Popular Democratic Party, too, was organized from remnants; of the center politically, sometimes rightist without being royalist, it stood up well during the last war. From this group was born the MRP (Popular Republican Movement) of which M. Schuman today is a representative. Their rise to power has been due to the loss of face of right wing elements and to the operation of Catholic action groups. How powerful it will be in the future is being fought out in France right now.

No evaluation of the Catholic political and social situation can be adequate without a recognition of the impact and importance of the Jocistes. They introduced a very necessary Catholic leaven into labor movements. Prior to the war, right wing and Catholic were almost synonymous terms. Further, the link between the "decent" part of society and Catholicism has had a great deal to do historically with opposition to the Church by socialist groups. This has been altered by the JOC and the Christian trade union movement.

Previously, Catholics had a difficult problem to face: if their youth joined the unions they lost their faith. There was, therefore, a considerable trend, headed by admirable and sacrificing leaders, in which Catholics organized their own unions which were open to all holding the social doctrines of the Church.

That a great change has taken place in the position of the Church in France is shown by the pastoral letter in which the Archbishop of Paris recently spoke of the necessity of Catholic action centering on the laboring classes. The contemporary position

of the Church may be judged from reading *Growth or Decline: The Church Today* by Emmanuel Cardinal Suhard, published this year in an English translation. The Church's new emphasis upon its social teachings will help to solidify its position even if the present government of France should fall. This has been aided, in part, by the courageous actions of many priests during the occupation in the slave labor camps.

The Church, then, is in the position of being able to heal many of the wounds of long standing by reemphasizing its interest in the cause of the worker and by showing that it is not a reactionary force in the France of today.

The Catholic Renaissance Society

Its Past and Future

(Continued from Page 6)

acclaim to a world now seeking to emerge from materialism and to reach out once more toward eternal values. Cardinal Suhard of Paris assures us that the branch of olive which the Spirit of God ever sends to His Ark, the Church, has "la grâce et la fraîcheur humide du printemps." We need not mourn over the blossoms of a past cultural Maytime, for, with Newman, we know "that May is one day to have its revenge over November." The ever increasing interest taken in the Catholic Renaissance Society and the growing zeal for the promotion of its objectives give evidence that the Church is now in one of these Maytimes of a full and varied life. For in America we are now beginning to enjoy a resurgence of that supernatural culture which promotes the plenitude of human existence, offering, as it does, to put more truth, more beauty, more love, and more order into the minds and souls of Christian Humanists.

Book Reviews

La Minuit. By Félix-Antoine Savard. Montreal: Fides.

L'avouerai-je franchement? C'est avec un préjugé favorable que j'abordai la lecture de *La Minuit*. Mais je me sens incapable de ranger *La Minuit* dans aucune des catégories chères aux historiens et aux critiques littéraires. Désireux de voir clair dans mes réactions, je relus l'oeuvre avec plaisir, lentement, attentivement, pensivement, d'abord pour en déguster à loisir, telle une liqueur précieuse, la prose poétique, imagée, musicale et sonore, ensuite—telle est la magie de l'art!—pour en ruminer le thème central, le message rédempteur, lourd de spiritualité chrétienne. Qu'est-ce alors que *La Minuit*? Certes pas un roman, tel que l'ont défini du moins les meilleurs artisans de ce genre littéraire. On dirait plutôt, puisqu'il faut risquer un jugement, une magnifique parabole évangélique en trois tableaux, un drame symbolique en trois temps, un merveilleux conte poétique et surnaturel, qui nous transporte, pour ainsi dire, dans une atmosphère lointaine, presque biblique, grâce à la poésie qui s'en dégage; poésie des humbles, non contaminés par ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler la civilisation, poésie des âmes simples, vivant en contact avec la nature et avec Dieu. Mais hélas! qui goûte cette poésie dans notre monde en révolution, désaxé et "dépersonnalisé"?

Au reste, il importe peu que l'on puisse appliquer une étiquette à *La Minuit*. La plupart des chefs-d'oeuvre poétiques qui figurent dans les anthologies, comme des tableaux de maîtres qui emplissent les musées, ne sont-ils pas mal étiquetés? Ils ne sont pas moins des oeuvres poétiques et artistiques pour cela. *La Minuit* est une oeuvre d'art, artistement ciselée, d'une remarquable simplicité de facture et d'une rare densité de pensées et de sentiments. S'il est vrai que "l'art consiste à faire quelque chose de rien," il faut admettre que, pour un poète authentique comme M. l'abbé Félix-Antoine Savard, un rien, c'est tout.

La Minuit: tel est le titre symbolique du dernier livre de M. l'abbé Félix-Antoine Savard, membre de la Société Royale du Canada et professeur de poésie française à la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université Laval. *La Minuit*, c'est la nuit divine entre toutes où l'Enfant-Dieu s'est fait chair pour apporter de la joie aux hommes et mettre fin à leur solitude; car, depuis que le Christ est venu sur la terre, les hommes n'ont plus le droit de parler de solitude, et les pauvres, qui existaient jadis et qui existeront toujours—notre terre n'est pas le Paradis, ne sera jamais le Paradis, quoi qu'en pensent les réformateurs de tout acabit qui veulent en bannir la souffrance—les pauvres, dis-je, ont droit à l'attention, à l'affection, au respect, à l'aide efficace des gens mieux partagés par les richesses de la terre. *La Minuit*, c'est le contrepoint de l'Arcadie merveilleuse, du grand soir qu'on nous annonce périodiquement, où les hommes, ayant banni la pauvreté, formeront un immense monopole et célébreront des noces éternelles avec la terre, où la terre elle-même sera devenue un Paradis, à l'image duquel l'homme sera fait et pour lequel il travaillera et crèvera. *La Minuit*, c'est l'étoile d'or miraculeuse, symbole d'amour et de sacrifice, de charité et de paix, dont le monde a grandement besoin, car l'homme, fait de boue et de bouillure, rivé à la terre et à ses richesses, l'a perdue de vue, cette étoile de Noël. A l'instar des Mages, il doit aller à sa recherche, l'adorer, se faire humble et petit, reconnaître sa dépendance vis-à-vis du Créateur, comme font la nature et les oiseaux. Tel est, si je ne m'égare, le message chrétien, vieux comme l'*Evangile*, que M. Savard a su renouveler de façon poétique dans ce conte merveilleux qu'est *La Minuit*.

On ne résume pas un poème, même s'il est écrit en prose. Tout au plus peut-on en inspirer la lecture et la méditation. Je crains que les sociologues et les économistes, généralement férus de statistiques et de théories matérialistes, ne se méprennent sur la portée de *La Minuit*; ils auraient tort de croire que l'auteur de *Menand Maître-draveux* prêche la résig-

nation, du moins ce que l'on entend habituellement par ce terme dans le langage courant, c'est-à-dire l'acceptation passive de son sort sans aucun souci de l'améliorer. Les poètes, d'ailleurs, sont souvent incompris; on leur reproche, à tort, de ne pouvoir ranger en équations sur la table, pour ainsi dire, les mystères de l'existence, qu'ils aiment à scruter et dont ils sont plus conscients que la majorité des mortels. On les prend pour des rêveurs et des idéalistes. Au fond, ce sont les seuls réalistes qui soient. Ils nous font voir ce qui nous échappe habituellement, ils nous introduisent dans le monde angoissant de l'existence, déchirant le voile des apparences et atteignant le cœur même du problème de la vie, son origine et son orientation, sa simplicité et sa complexité, ses grandeurs et ses misères.

M. Savard est l'un de ces poètes. Grâce à la magie de son verbe et de ses images—le langage naturel du poète n'est-il pas l'image?—le monde est comme transmué autour de soi. A le lire, on se plaît à penser que notre littérature a fait un pas de géant depuis trente ans. (Après tout, il n'y a de vieux au Canada que les racontars des guides historiques.) Que nous sommes loin du temps où nos braves maîtres, faute d'avoir des livres canadiens sous la main, s'ingéniaient, sans succès bien entendu, à nous faire décrire la nature de France, comme si nous habitions la France, comme si l'art d'écrire pouvait consister à mentir, à se piper de mots, à se battre les flancs! Quel maître d'observation, doublé d'un poète sûr de sa langue, n'avons-nous pas en la personne de M. Savard! Nos écoliers, nos collégiens et nos étudiants peuvent apprendre à voir et à écrire en le lisant et en l'étudiant. Il est un maître de la prose d'art au Canada français.

Il aime et savoure notre belle langue. Il l'écrit avec délices. Nourri de Montaigne et de Bossuet, de Claudel et de Valéry, d'Homère et de la Bible, de Villon et de Mistral, M. Savard est surtout lui-même; son art a beau faire penser aux écrivains de jadis et d'aujourd'hui, il est authentiquement personnel. Il a le don de voir, de faire voir, même de rajeunir ce qu'il voit; ses descriptions—et c'est là-dedans qu'il excelle, et dans la méditation lyrique—ont la fraîcheur du printemps; on croirait assister à l'aurore du monde.

Laval University, Québec —Maurice Lebel

Return to Tradition: A Comprehensive Catholic Anthology from 1830 to the Present Time. By Francis Beauchesne Thornton. Bruce. \$8.50.

"Here is God's plenty," the reader is impelled to say when he closes this book of nearly a thousand double-columned pages.

Of the making of anthologies there is no end, but this collection fills a genuine need. Heretofore no editor has attempted the gigantic task of trying to include within one volume a survey of the Catholic literary revival of the past hundred years as it has manifested itself in England, in France, in Ireland, and in our own United States. Anthologies devoted to one country or to one genre have been collected, but here one will find Newman as well as Claudel, Padraic Colum as well as Thomas Merton. Here are Catholic historians, poets, essayists, philosophers, liturgists, novelists, and dramatists. Authors of a century ago are here as well as writers living in our own time. In a very comprehensive sense, then, the volume is truly Catholic.

The difficulties of editing a sound anthology are numerous. It must be not spotty but representative. It should include not only the standard and expected selections but a series of surprises as well. It should present not only major figures but at least a sampling of minor writers. It cannot always reprint selections in full but the cutting must be done with sensitive taste lest the book be merely a patchwork of shredded excerpts. Finally, the editor must provide adequate introductions and notes and must carefully indicate the editions from which the selections are taken.

When one realizes the magnitude of this enterprise he recognizes that Father Thornton has performed it with judgment and skill. Of course one may quarrel with him for printing a particular passage and excluding another, for stressing the contribution of one man rather than another, for including one writer while omitting another.

Limitations of space undoubtedly made it impossible for the editor to go outside the French Revival on the continent—except for a section on the liturgical revival—and to embrace such figures as Sigrid Undset or Gertrude von Le Fort.

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The only genres excluded are literary criticism and the short story. Instead of the latter, Father Thornton elected to include selections from novelists. This decision will be resented by some readers who feel that a novel is an integrated whole and cannot be anthologized. While no one would deny that the novel ought to be read *in toto*, yet is there a better way to introduce novelists than by attempting to select fairly long passages which represent the temper of the writer?

The immediately contemporaneous American selection is very expectedly the part that involves a large degree of personal choice on the part of the editor of an anthology. The winnowing of time has not as yet taken place, reputations are not settled, and perspective is subject to subtle and almost incalculable distortions. The anthologist has to take risks. Father Thornton faces them bravely, and he himself would undoubtedly be the first to agree that a critical debate about the judgment involved in including some authors and excluding others is not merely reasonable but an aid to establishing the genuine stature especially of those writers who have lived in our own time and in our own country.

For the most part the separate introductions are not merely adequate but they demonstrate mellow discernment and on independent judgment that is not afraid to point out weakness as well as strength. Father Thornton is not one to be caught in the quagmire of pietistically sentimentalizing inferior artistry or of praising good intention substituted for real performance.

Behind the whole volume is the editor's sense of the urgency of his undertaking. In his introduction he points out:

As the national spirit in many lands reveals itself for the monstrous thing it is, as the last vestiges of culturally uprooted liberalism slowly disappear, the balanced and spiritual dynamism of Traditionalism seems the only force capable of restoring men to sanity. Though wars threaten and the Red tides move over continental Europe, Western culture cannot be totally destroyed while living Traditionalism sends its light abroad over the world.

Father Thornton has done his task and done it well. Now it is for intelligent readers and teachers to give such a work the widest cur-

rency so that many may find in its plenitude that tradition which is old and yet ever new.

—John Pick

Marquette University
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Journey into Faith: The Anglican Life of John Henry Newman. By Eleanor Ruggles. Norton. \$4.00.

Young Mr. Newman. By Maisie Ward. Sheed Ward. \$4.50.

It is an amazing fact that though a veritable library of Newmanism exists no full-length study of Newman before conversion has been published up to now and that the two volumes before us appeared within a few months of each other. Wilfrid Ward's official biography of the Cardinal devotes only seventy-five pages out of twelve hundred pages to his Anglican period. Newman himself seems to have felt that his *Apologia*, his brief *Autobiographical Memoir*, and the correspondence he turned over to Anne Mozley for selection adequately covered his Anglican years.

Carlyle used to insist that a biographer must love the subject of his study if he were to penetrate below the surface to the inner man. If sympathetic understanding is the more exact term to describe Eleanor Ruggles' feeling, love mingled with veneration describes Maisie Ward's perfectly. That is not surprising for she was born in the Newman tradition. Her grandfather was the stocky, fiery logic-at-all-cost friend and disciple of Newman, and her father the official biographer of the great Oratorian. To her from childhood Newman was less a great figure of the past than a living personality who was at the same time the embodiment of an era of almost revolutionary change. Maisie Ward had another great advantage, for while Eleanor Ruggles was confined to published works she had access to the veritable gold mine of unpublished material which is housed at the Birmingham Oratory.

The titles of the two books indicate their essential difference: Eleanor Ruggles' primary concern is with Newman's change of faith, Maisie Ward's with the young man who changed his faith. Eleanor Ruggles thinks of Newman as a highly interesting spiritual and

psychology study, Maisie Ward as a many-sided, much gifted youth who loved his family dearly, poked fun at his sisters, liked to be recognized as an excellent student, was happy to get home for a holiday, had a sense of humor, loved music, learned to be a fairly good horseman, and though shy, had the courage of his convictions. Eleanor Ruggles keeps the spotlight pretty steadily on Newman; Maisie Ward often turns it on figures of secondary importance especially the members of his family to whom he was closely bound and who, particularly after his father's death, looked more and more to John for guidance and even financial aid.

Eleanor Ruggles' Newman seems too austere, too alone, too sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought. When she pictures him standing in tears beside Bowden's coffin he seems much more true to her conception of him than when he rapturously kissed the newspaper which announced the election of his friend Rogers to an Oriel Fellowship. The difficulty about Eleanor Ruggles' portrait is not that it is false but that it is incomplete. The legendary Newman, at least before conversion, has commonly been made so somber, so introspective, so aloof, that in some quarters he has been called effeminate and self-pitying. If Maisie Ward had done no more than rescue Newman from such a misinterpretation she would have amply justified this book of four hundred and sixty-seven pages. His family relationships, so full of affection and gaiety, his interest in humble folk, his eagerness to minister to even the least of his flock, his joy in long walks, his incredible capacity for work, his zest for battle with his peers (as when he helped to defeat Peel for reelection to Parliament), his disgust for pharisaism and pretentiousness, the appeal for his personality to all sorts and conditions of men—not the least to generations of hypercritical undergraduates—all these Maisie Ward has shown to be as essentially a part of Newman as his sensitivity, his qualities of imagination, and his genius.

As compared with Eleanor Ruggles, Maisie Ward has enriched her study in other ways. She has sketched in the social, economic, and, to some degree, the political scene as it was in Newman's young manhood: the scarcely realized plight of the poor, the all too common conception of the Church as providing a career

for the ambitious rather than an opportunity for spiritual usefulness, the crippling limitation of the right to vote in England, and the complete denial of political equality to Irish Catholics. These evils played a part in bringing on the crisis which impelled Keble to preach his fateful sermon on "National Apostasy" even though the Movement which followed was, as Eleanor Ruggles aptly states, "essentially a struggle between the principles of dogma and antidogma, and between the acceptance and the rejection of supernaturally revealed truth in an era of religious liberalism."

In a sense Newman was right in believing that the *Apologia* and his biographical memoir and letters edited by Anne Mozley would suffice for an understanding of his development up to his conversion. But the reader of our day wants to know many things which were clear enough three generations ago: Keble, Pusey, Hurrell Froude, and half a dozen others must be clothed with flesh; the divergent tenets of rival religious parties must be clarified; the sequence of important events must be kept free from confusion. Above all, as Maisie Ward has realized, the world in which Newman lived, moved, and had his being, was Oxford only in the sense that Oxford was a microcosm in which the percipient reader of today is made aware of the great forces astir in the England of young Mr. Newman.

Both Eleanor Ruggles and Maisie Ward have performed admirably. Each has done a sincere, understanding, and penetrating book. *Journey into Faith* is more balanced, restrained, and in style more even. *Young Mr. Newman* if often discursive is always rewarding. It deserves the distinguished success it seems sure to achieve.

Both books are inadequate as to reference notes and indexes. Later editions should remedy these faults.

Hunter College
New York City

—Joseph J. Reilly

Alice Meynell Centenary Tribute. Edited by Terence L. Connolly, S.J. Bruce Humphries. \$2.25.

Bishop John J. Wright of Boston, in his remarks concluding the Symposium held at Boston College in honor of the Centenary of Alice Meynell, summed up his impressions of

the evening by saying that "all unseen, a gentle personality visited Boston College tonight . . . I cannot help but feel that Mrs. Meynell was present here in a most special and personal way." Readers of this brief collection of centenary papers will agree that His Excellency's comment was an accurate as well as a graceful conclusion to a literary festival which displays in the several papers the elegant good taste, the wit and the lightness of soul so characteristic of the author whose memory they celebrate.

Alice Meynell would have appreciated this party in her honor, this gathering of Christian humanists whose evident learning is expressed in such human and humane terms, as she would not have enjoyed a lumbering *fest-schrift*. Robert F. Wilberforce, C.B.E., who remembers Mrs. Meynell as the presiding genius of the drawing room at Granville Place, conveys some sense of her serene patience, her essentially solitary temperament and her ceremonious hospitality. Professor Anne Kimball Tuell of Wellesley College, whose *Mrs. Meynell and Her Literary Generation* is a distinguished contribution to Meynell criticism, combines an appreciation of Alice Meynell's prose with a brief story of her literary career. Mrs. Meynell's originality, "a fine privacy of word and vision" reflecting almost perfectly her own distinction, delicacy and fineness of soul, is seen "not only as a grace but as a force." Professor Tuell is indeed to be thanked for recalling Mrs. Meynell's "vigours," her ardent support of woman's rights, her Christian socialism, her strictures on provincialism and on the liberal ignorance of America and Americans.

The first half of Sister Madeleva's contribution, entitled "Alice Meynell, Poet of My Delight," continues the vein of reminiscence established by the two preceding papers. The second half, which concerns Mrs. Meynell's "A Father of Women," is an enthusiastic tribute to the poet's "impeccable beauty, intellectual rectitude, philosophical truth." Sister Madeleva frames her quotation of "A Thrush before Dawn" between two brief paragraphs of brilliant critical insight. Several sentences flash with their own poetic power, as the following example will testify: "All the economies of lyric perfection are here, inevitable as the economy of a flower."

The editor's own paper, "The Alice Meynell Collection at Boston College" is, in effect, a foreword to his extremely valuable short-title list of Alice Meynell's complete works. It forms a solid base of scholarship for the lighter but no less valuable companion pieces. In fine, this centenary tribute to Alice Meynell is a model of scholarship, intelligence and taste, a delight for its own sake as well as a useful memorial to a woman whose natural powers were elevated to charm by the genuine aura of grace.

—Francis X. Connolly

Fordham College
New York City

Das verborgene Antlitz: Eine Studie über Therese von Lisieux. By Ida Friederike Görres. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder; St. Louis: Herder. \$5.25.

Guardini remarks in one of his essays that the theme of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament is not the history of the Jews, but of God dealing with the Jews. Guided by the same motive Frau Görres takes up anew the tradition of the ancient *vita*, in which, too, the *magnalia Dei*, the great works of God in His saints was the theme, even as we repeat today: Blessed be God in His angels and in His saints! But this is also the theme of the saint's *Autobiography*. Nor is the coincidence fortuitous. Frau Görres shows that St. Therese's sanctity, far from being something wholly new, derived its ultimate value and significance from the fact that it was a continuation and a renewal of the deepest strain of Christian piety such as had never ceased to exist in chosen hearts, indeed, in whole communities such as Lisieux. In her *Study*, which she does not regard as by any means definitive, Frau Görres attempts to translate the saint's "language of yesterday" and to make clearer her face "hidden behind the deluge of trivial art, the popular false conception of sanctity, and her own deliberate silence"—an art and a conception which repel many, a language and a silence impenetrable to many more.

Frau Görres tells her story chronologically and simply, but she binds the present now to the future, now to the past, as a spider or a lace-maker throws out a thread that will later

become the field of elaboration or the path of return to the heart of the web. This heart of the web is, as the title indicates, the hidden countenance in its obvious application to the countenance of St. Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face, the Therese unknown even to most, if indeed not to all, of her fellow sisters in the Carmel of Lisieux and unrevealed even in her *Autobiography*. But this veiling of her own face she had learned from her divine Lord and from His most blessed Mother. For her the hidden countenance was His and the depth of her devotion to this mystery of the Incarnation she expressed in her ejaculation: "O Face, that not even Thy own have ever known!" To Therese the infancy of Jesus from which she had taken her first Carmelite name at the time of her novitiate had a profound significance. She understood His infancy as the first station of divinity clothed with humanity, divinity manifesting itself, but with inevitably hidden face. Her second name taken at her profession shows this clearly. Only both names, only her full name reveals the profundity of her insight and of her aspiration: St. Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face, her name and her ejaculation: "O Face, that not even Thy own have ever known!"

Frau Görres, who is known in this country under her maiden name of Coudenhove as the author of *Sanctity in Essays in Order*, writes gently and without recrimination against those who have perhaps overemphasized the "little flower" and the painted roses with the result of obscuring still further the face of one who deserves to be better known for what she actually was: a really great saint. Is she then not a great saint who, surrendering herself to God in imitation of Him Who said: "Behold, I come to do Thy will" and of her who said: "Be it done unto me according to Thy will," could say in her last days: "Since I was three years old I have denied God nothing that He asked of me"; who, told by her superior to write an account of her life, accepted with joy the opportunity to "sing His unspeakable mercies"; who through four months of indescribable agony enhanced by continual spiritual dryness persevered in her little way of cheerful, loving response to Him and to all those around her, because she saw "Jesus at the bottom of their hearts"? Is she not of

those of whom her Lord said: "The same is my mother and my brethren"? And could a saint be any greater in His sight?

This *Study of Therese of Lisieux* is based on the most careful research and documentation at present available. The interpretation of the saint's life and words is offered out of long familiarity with the same doctrine and tradition that formed her spirituality, a thorough knowledge of modern psychology, wide acquaintance with the phenomenon of Catholic sanctity in many other lives, and fruitful meditation on the problems presented by many previous particular interpretations clearly incompatible with the evidence as a whole. One cannot refrain from mentioning in however short and inadequate a review the many enlightening and illuminating explanatory interpolations that reveal the author's doctrinal soundness and wise spiritual maturity. *The Hidden Face* is a biography of a saint written with all the techniques of modern scholarship and the literary skill of an accomplished and successful writer, the life of a Carmelite nun as interesting as a novel, as edifying as the *Imitation*, for it is the *Imitation* in practice, the following of her Master by one who based her little way on the *New Testament* and the *Imitation of Christ*. Frau Görres has made accessible from source material and through her interpretation what is necessary for those without relation to St. Therese to see something of her hidden face and to come under the spell of her sanctity. The book deserves to become a "Companion to the Autobiography" and that calls for prompt and competent translation for the benefit of those who do not read German.

In another respect, too, Frau Görres's book is significant. To those who tend to think of Germany and France as always hostile, always building West Walls and Wotan Lines, eternally hurling defiance at each other, Frau Görres offers the pleasing spectacle of that Catholicity that knows no national bounds, that knows only the differences of local and personal character, that local and personal character that thrives indeed best under the aegis of the Church, the guardian of local custom, of human freedom, of the dignity of the person, regardless of race or nationality. When she speaks of French institutions, customs, places or persons it is always with the

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same understanding, the same charity, as if she were speaking of her own nation—and in a sense she is, for she is first of all a citizen of the City of God, a national in the united nation of Christ the King. What a satisfying contrast to the cheap best-sellers of stage and press that misrepresent and hold up to scorn and ridicule the neighbor across the Rhine or the Channel. In addition to spreading knowledge of the real Therese of Lisieux and devotion to her little way, this German biography of a French saint gives internal evidence of

her spirit alive in its author and in the author's country and is a welcome manifestation of the contemporary German renaissance.

—Jane F. Goodloe

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J. F. G.

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